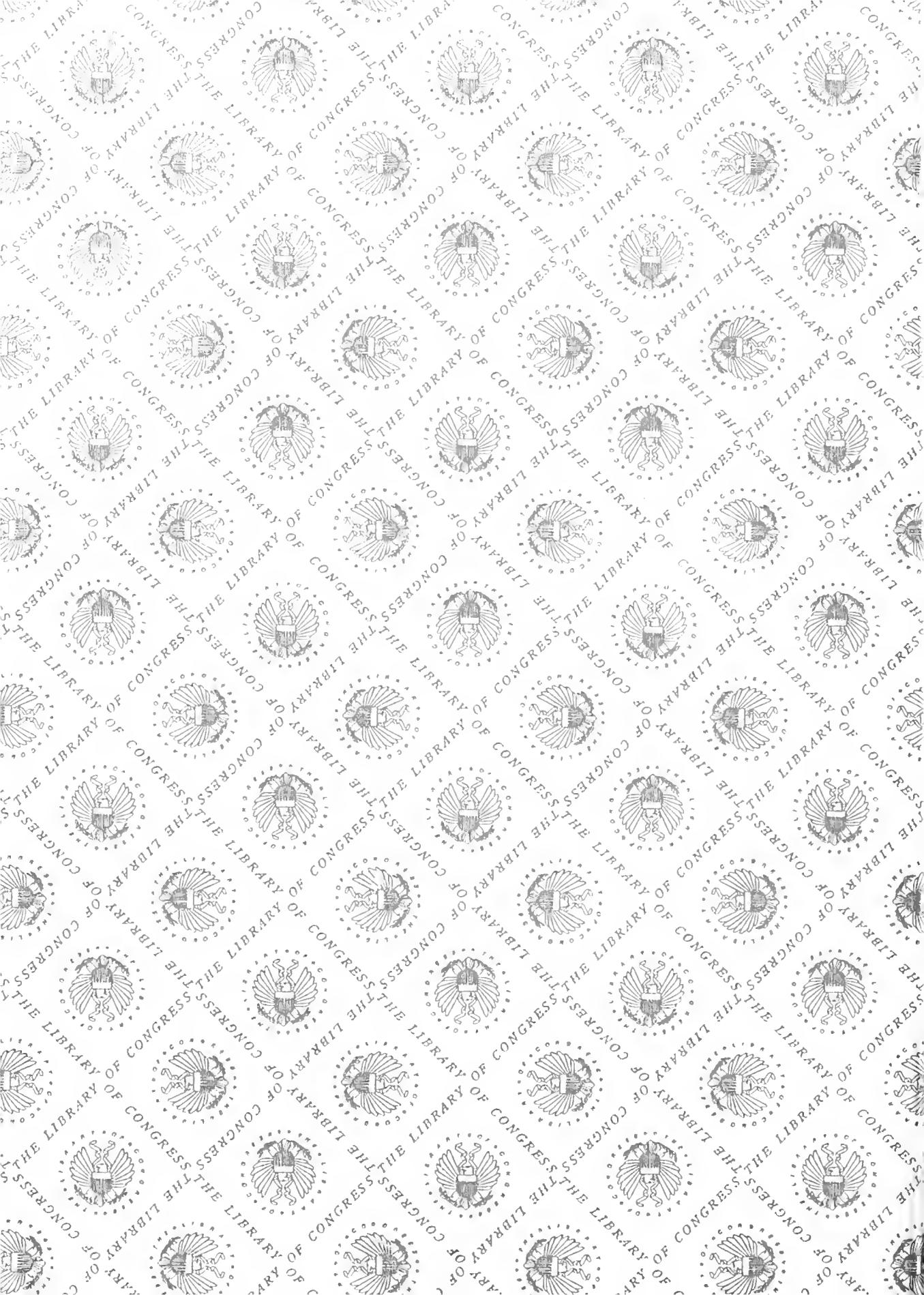
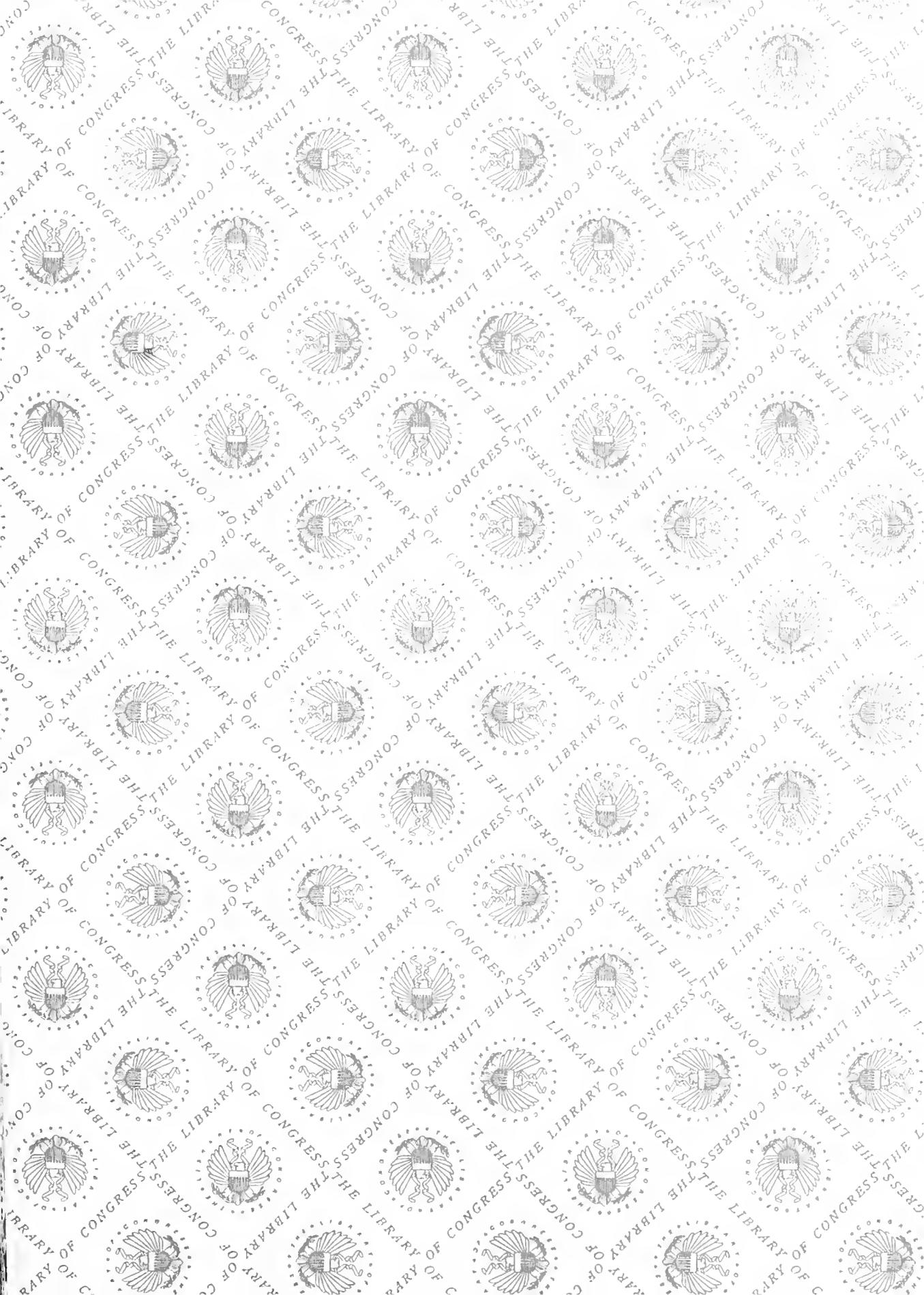


1891









HOMeward FROM THE FIELDS SHE HIES,
NORA WITH THE NUT-BROWN EYES.

THOUGHTS AND FANCIES

Poems and Pictures of Life and Nature

BY

MRS. MARY D^W BRINE

AUTHOR OF "MOTHER'S SONGS," "GRANDMA'S ATTIC TREASURES," "PAPA'S LITTLE DAUGHTERS,"
"FOUR LITTLE FRIENDS," "HITHER AND THITHER," ETC.

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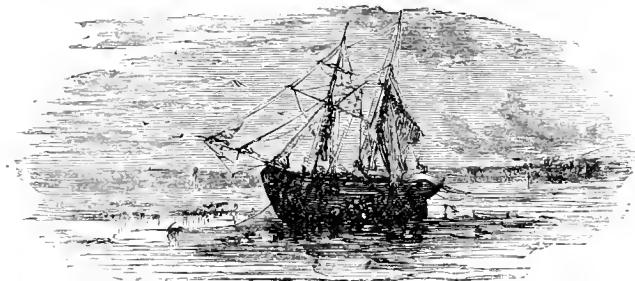
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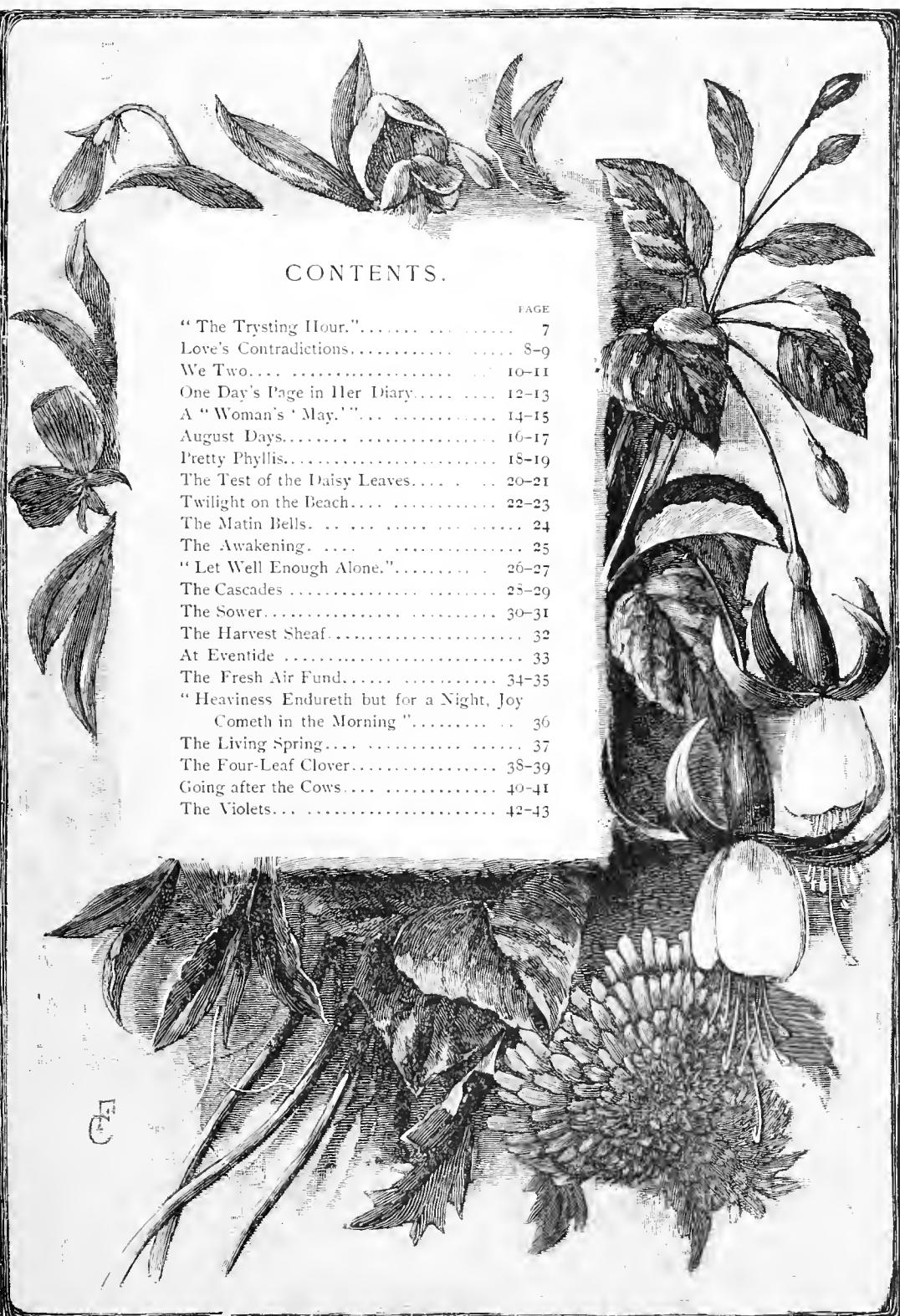
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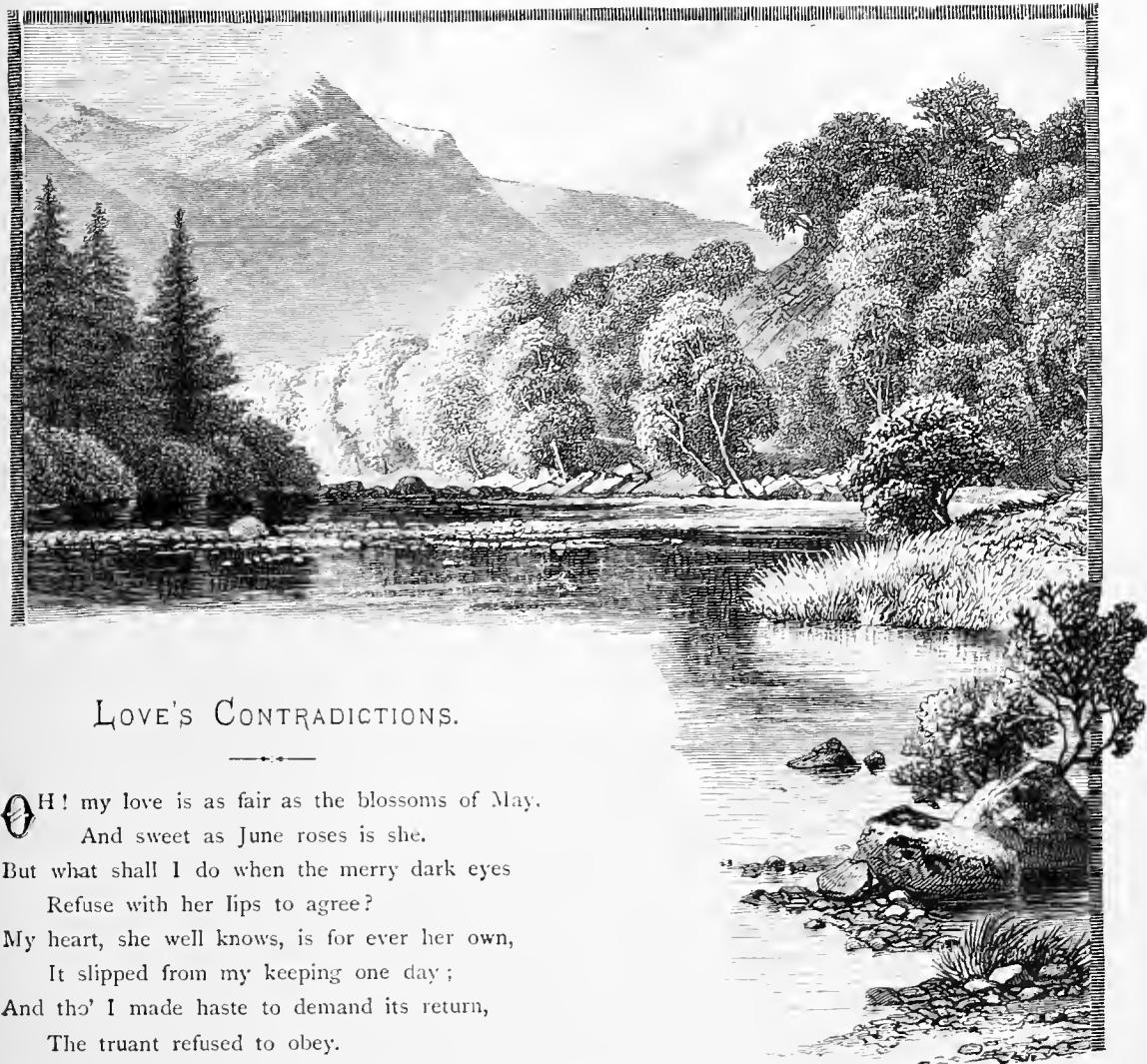


THE TRYSTING HOUR.

OMEWARD from the fields she hies,
 Nora with the nut-brown eyes.
Thro' the woods at close of day
 Eagerly she takes her way.
Weary? Yes; but knowing who
 Seeks the little foot-bridge, too.
What cares she for weariness?

Her true laddie's fond caress
 (As he comes his love to meet)
Soon her waiting heart will greet.
Then together, side by side,
At the happy eventide,
Hand in hand, with eyes aglow,
O'er the homeward path they'll go.





LOVE'S CONTRADICTIONS.

O H ! my love is as fair as the blossoms of May,
And sweet as June roses is she.
But what shall I do when the merry dark eyes
Refuse with her lips to agree?
My heart, she well knows, is for ever her own,
It slipped from my keeping one day ;
And tho' I made haste to demand its return,
The truant refused to obey.

She knows I am waiting an honest reply
To the question I asked—long ago.
But, alas ! while her *eyes* shine a positive "Yes,"
Her saucy, red lips answer—"No!"
Now what can be done with a maiden like this ?
 My heart on the *qui vive* remains,
First hoping, then longing, then coaxing, and then
 Most cruelly teased for my pains !

She's "in love with Dame Nature," she merrily says,
When I press her for sober replies ;
But there's somehow a glance that my heart beats
 to see
When she lifts to my own her bright eyes.

There never was seen so provoking a maid,
Nor one so bewitching indeed :
And I am so truly her captive, that still
 I'll follow where'er she may lead.

She may "love old Dame Nature," but I will love
 best
 The maid who is Nature's own child :
First playful, then sober, then grave, and then gay ;
 Cruel at times, and then mild.
Oh ! which are the truer—the eyes or the lips ?
 Of the two—which can lover believe ?
I'll trust the dear eyes, for red lips are oft false :
 But the *eyes*—they can never deceive !



WE TWO.

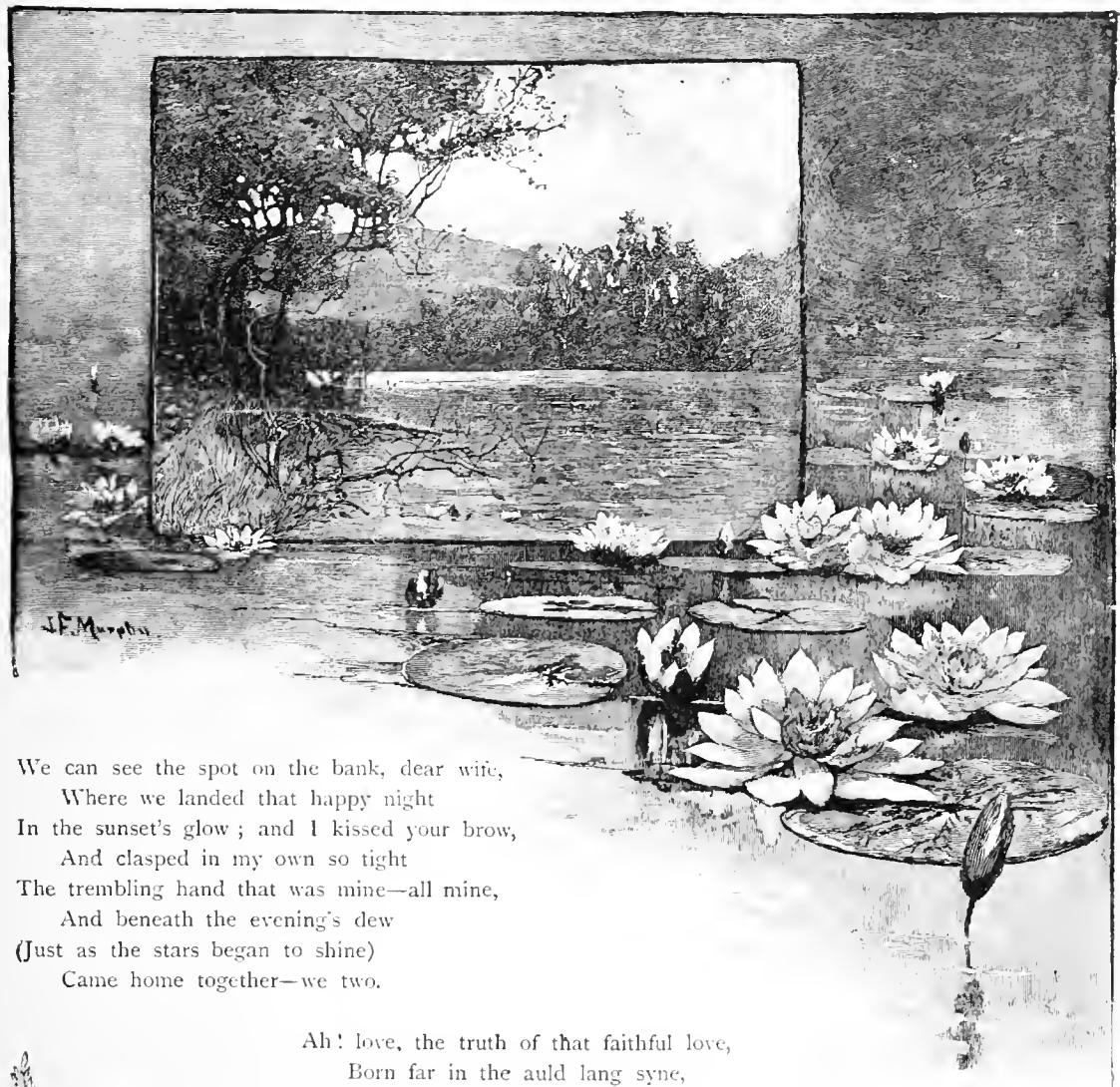
COME wife, dear woman, and sit by me,
For the toilsome day is done,
And many thoughts in my heart are born
With the setting of the sun.
Ay, give me your hand, my patient love,
That my own may clasp it tight.
Not dearer it was in the days agone,
Dear wife, than it is to-night.

Old and wrinkled it may be, dear,
But look you, wife, at the shine
Of the ring that has clung to your finger there
Since the day that I called you mine.
'Twas a long, long march from our youth to age;
But Time, be he ne'er so gray,
Can never tarnish the lustre, dear,
Of the pledge of our wedding-day.

But you dipped your hand in the waters bright
And gathered a lily for me,
And bade me wear it home, dear heart,
That all the village might see
That Dorothy, fairest of all the maids,
Had given her hand and love
To Reuben—truest of all the lads,
Ay! true as the stars above!

Look, wife, look out o'er the dear old pond!
How it lies 'neath the sunset's glow,
All bathed in the tints we liked to see
In those days of our long ago.
The lilies are sweet, the lilies are white—
As white as they used to be
When, after the duties of day were done,
You rowed on the pond with me.

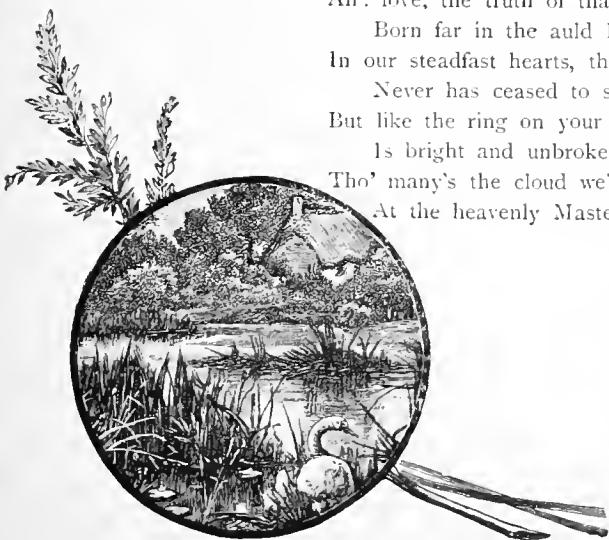
Do you remember that one glad eve
When my heart o'erflowed at last?
And the love I had feared to let you know
Came pouring so thick and fast
That it brought the beautiful blushes, love,
To your tender, dimpled cheek,
And you told your joy in your glowing eyes,
Tho' your red lips dared not speak.



We can see the spot on the bank, dear wife,
Where we landed that happy night
In the sunset's glow ; and I kissed your brow,
And clasped in my own so tight
The trembling hand that was mine—all mine,
And beneath the evening's dew
(Just as the stars began to shine)
Came home together—we two.

Ah ! love, the truth of that faithful love,
Born far in the auld lang sync,
In our steadfast hearts, thro' weal and woe,
Never has ceased to shine ;
But like the ring on your finger, dear,
Is bright and unbroken still,
Tho' many's the cloud we've passed beneath,
At the heavenly Master's will.

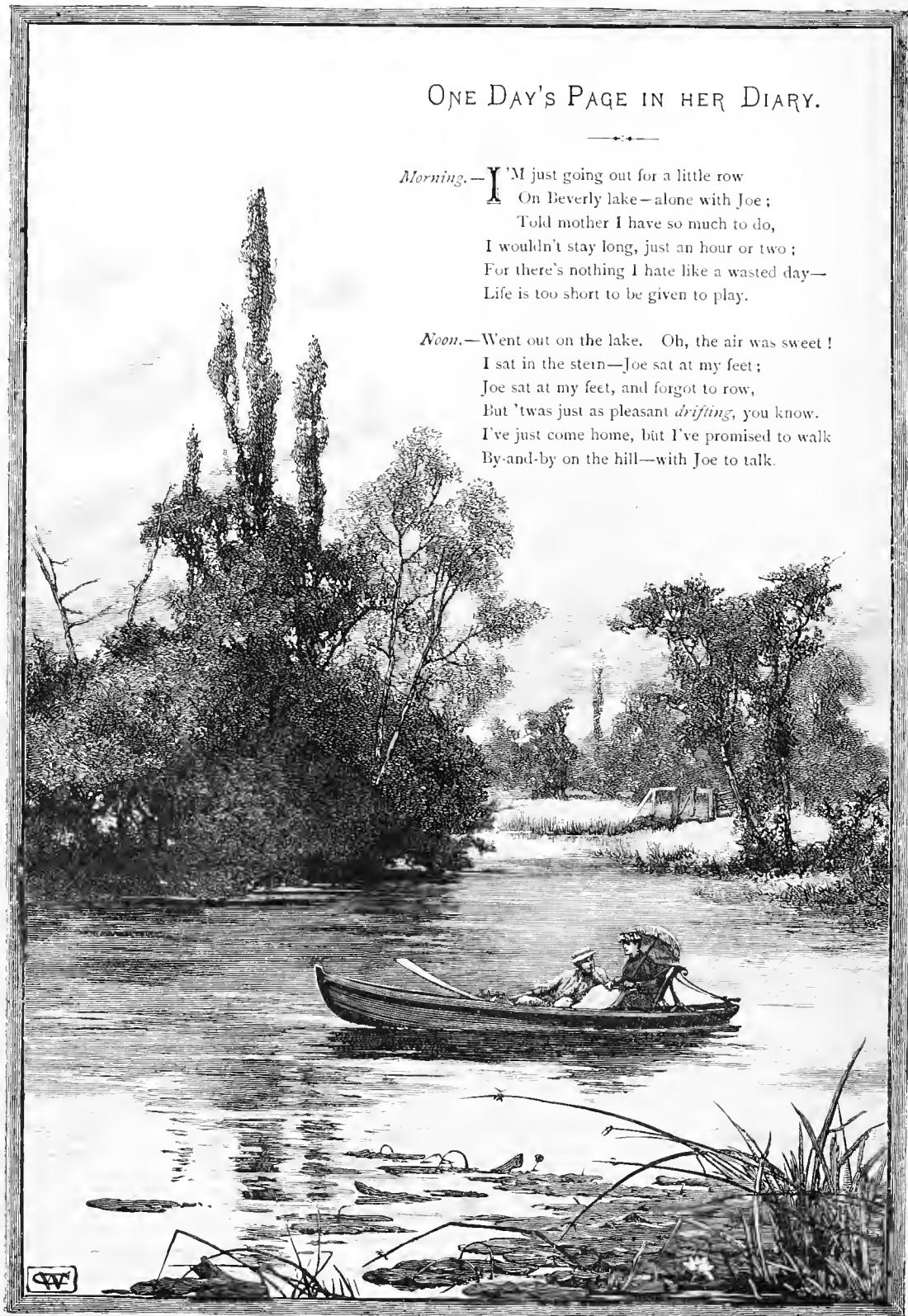
We're left—we two—to walk alone
In the twilight, dear heart, of life,
While our children wait at the shore above :
When shall we meet them, wife ?
Nay, dry those tears, and be glad with me
That tho' day is almost done,
We two are spared to each other still
At the setting of Life's low sun.



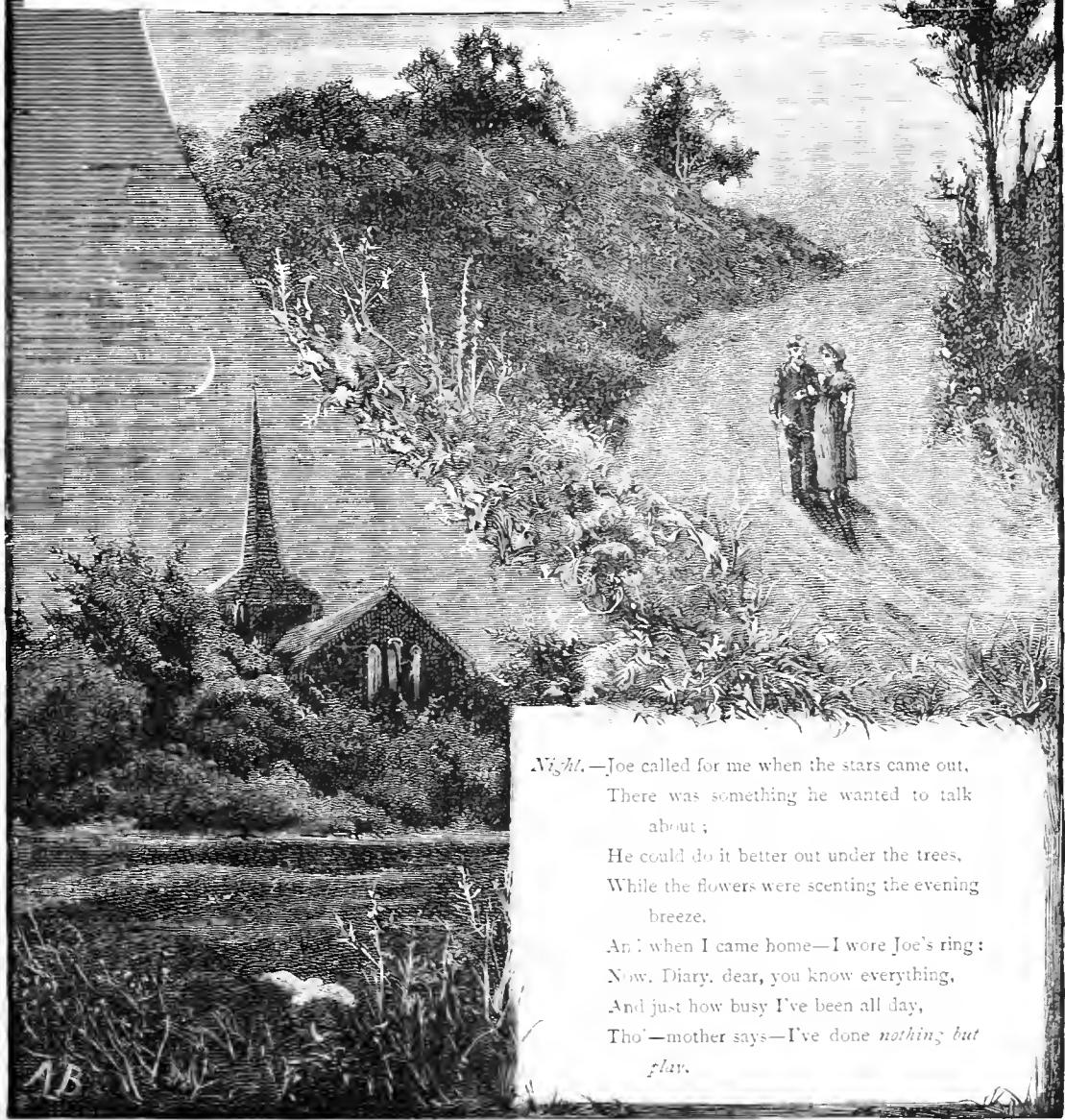
ONE DAY'S PAGE IN HER DIARY.

Morning.—I 'M just going out for a little row
On Beverly lake—alone with Joe;
Told mother I have so much to do,
I wouldn't stay long, just an hour or two;
For there's nothing I hate like a wasted day—
Life is too short to be given to play.

Noon.—Went out on the lake. Oh, the air was sweet !
I sat in the stern—Joe sat at my feet;
Joe sat at my feet, and forgot to row,
But 'twas just as pleasant *drifting*, you know.
I've just come home, but I've promised to walk
By-and-by on the hill—with Joe to talk.

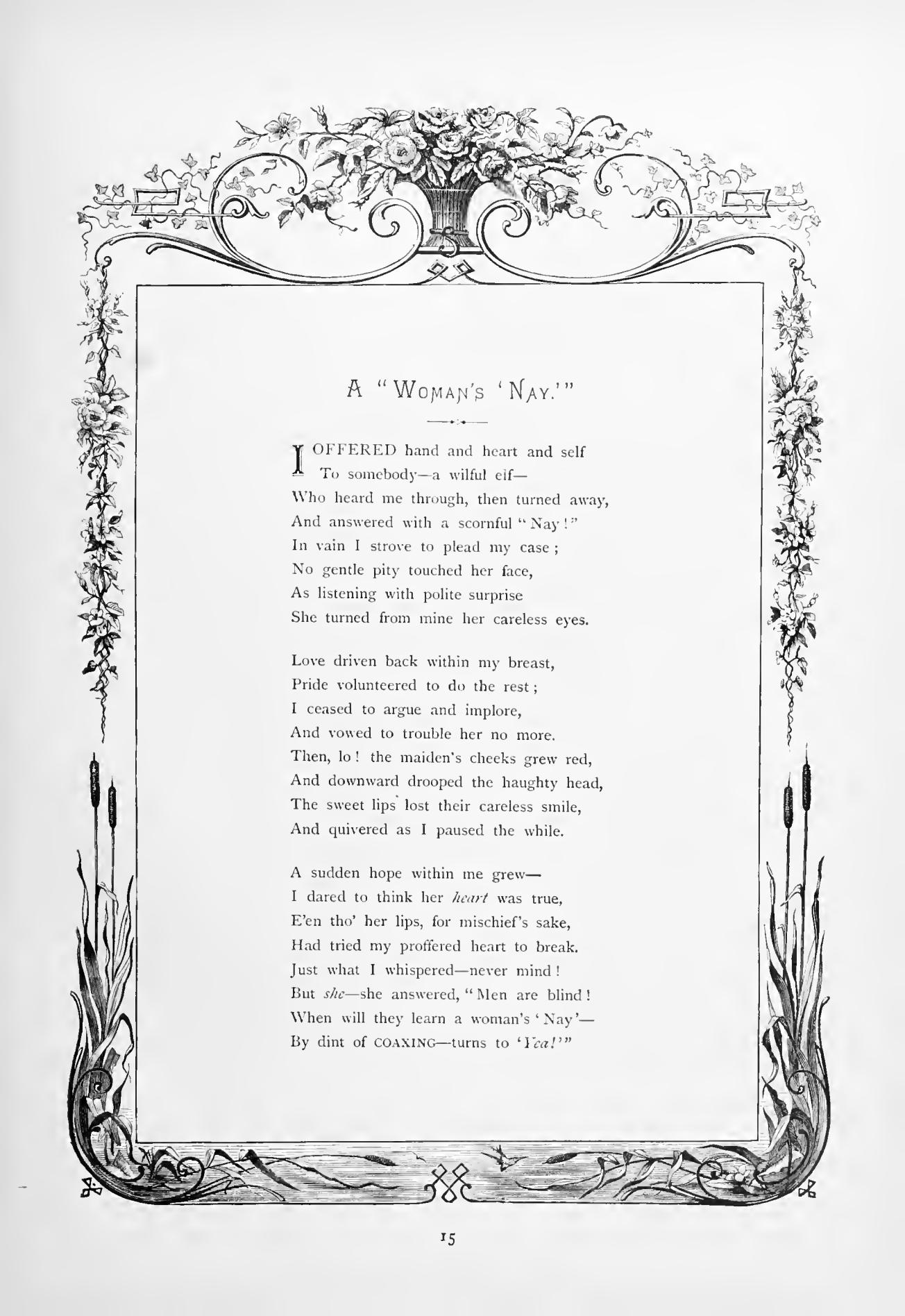


Twilight.—This has been a dreadfully busy day,
How fast the hours have slipped away !
Went out on the hill this afternoon,
Told mother I'd surely be back again
soon ;
But I was so busy listening to Joe,
I never thought how the hours could go.



Night.—Joe called for me when the stars came out,
There was something he wanted to talk
about ;
He could do it better out under the trees,
While the flowers were scenting the evening
breeze,
And when I came home—I wore Joe's ring :
Now, Diary, dear, you know everything,
And just how busy I've been all day,
Tho'—mother says—I've done *nothing*, but
play.





A "WOMAN'S 'NAY.'"

I OFFERED hand and heart and self
To somebody—a wilful elf—
Who heard me through, then turned away,
And answered with a scornful "Nay!"
In vain I strove to plead my case;
No gentle pity touched her face,
As listening with polite surprise
She turned from mine her careless eyes.

Love driven back within my breast,
Pride volunteered to do the rest;
I ceased to argue and implore,
And vowed to trouble her no more.
Then, lo! the maiden's cheeks grew red,
And downward drooped the haughty head,
The sweet lips lost their careless smile,
And quivered as I paused the while.

A sudden hope within me grew—
I dared to think her *heart* was true,
E'en tho' her lips, for mischief's sake,
Had tried my proffered heart to break.
Just what I whispered—never mind!
But *she*—she answered, "Men are blind!
When will they learn a woman's 'Nay'—
By dint of COAXING—turns to 'Yea!'"

AUGUST DAYS.

THESE are the soft, delicious August days,
Which so enwrap themselves in tender haze,
And peeping thro' the mist with drearful eyes,
Turn golden 'neath the glow of August skies.
The passing breeze stops lazily to play
With every leaf and flower on its way;
Borrows the perfume from its playmates sweet,
Then dies, to make the August day complete.

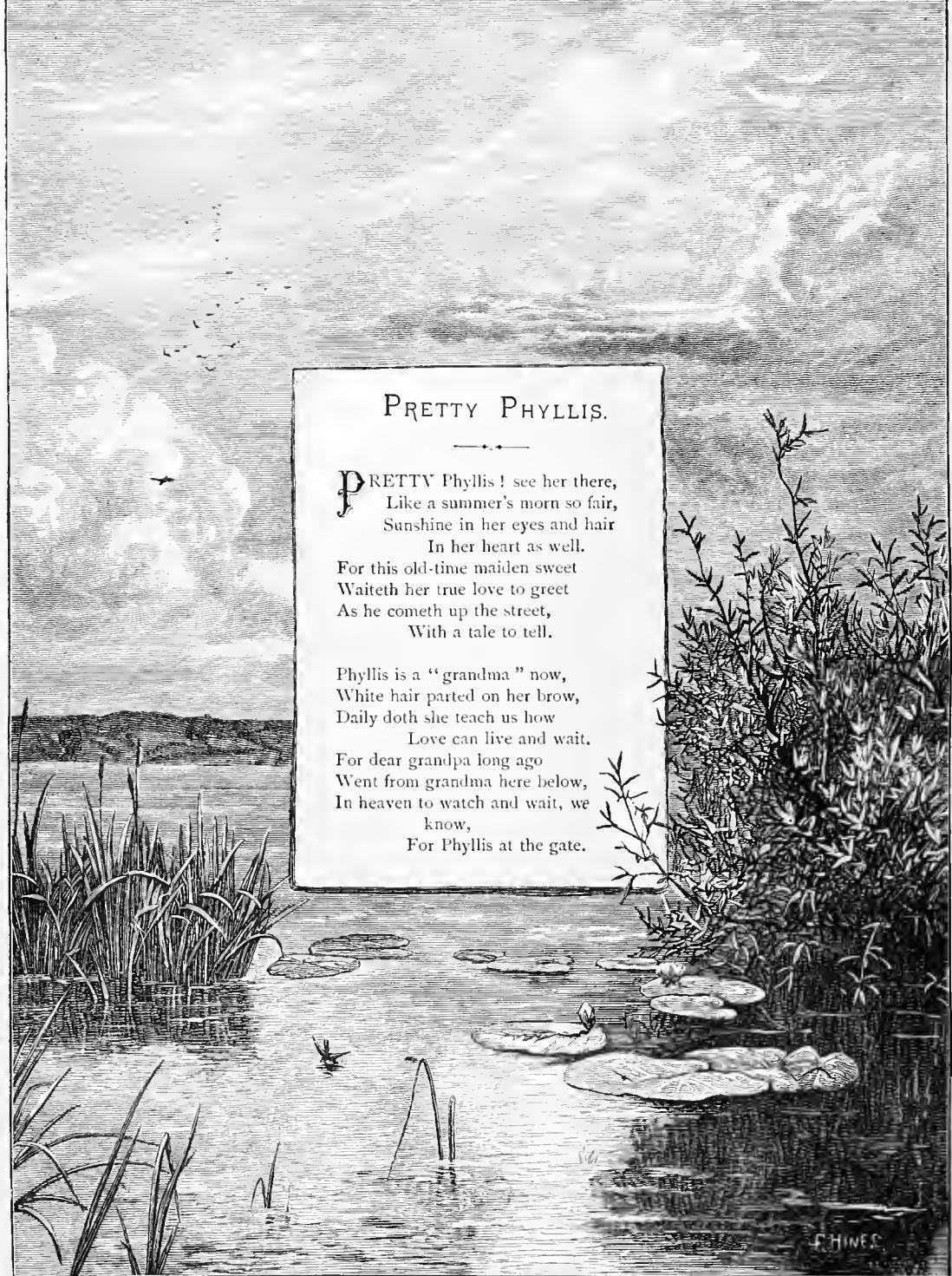


I rest me idly 'neath the branches spread,
Like strong protecting arms, above my head ;
While memory paints a picture fair to see,
And sings an old-time melody to me.
Only a song which tells of love and truth,
In days when all things blossomed bright for youth,
When timid hearts, by tell-tale eyes betrayed,
Grew bold at last, and earth a heaven made.

And then, ah, me ! as if but yesterday,
Our parted lives went each its chosen way.
I see the pale, grave face, the saddened eyes
Tear-dimmed, yet blue as were the happy skies.
I hear the voice, low-toned, with grief suppressed ;
I hear the long-drawn sigh which shook her breast ;
And, ah ! I feel again the weight of woe
Which hid my summer 'neath the winter's snow.



And so we parted ; and the after-years,
Made up of sunshine, shadow, joy, and tears,
Have healed our wounds, as years, we know, do heal
The bitterest sorrow human hearts can feel.
She has forgotten that past summer-time,
When love and truth kept up their merry chime ;
And I—I love but these clear August days,
Which fold me close within their dreamy haze.



PRETTY PHYLLIS.

PRETTY Phyllis ! see her there,
Like a summer's morn so fair,
Sunshine in her eyes and hair
In her heart as well.
For this old-time maiden sweet
Waiteth her true love to greet
As he cometh up the street,
With a tale to tell.

Phyllis is a "grandma" now,
White hair parted on her brow,
Daily doth she teach us how
Love can live and wait.
For dear grandpa long ago
Went from grandma here below,
In heaven to watch and wait, we
know,
For Phyllis at the gate.





THE TEST OF THE DAISY LEAVES.

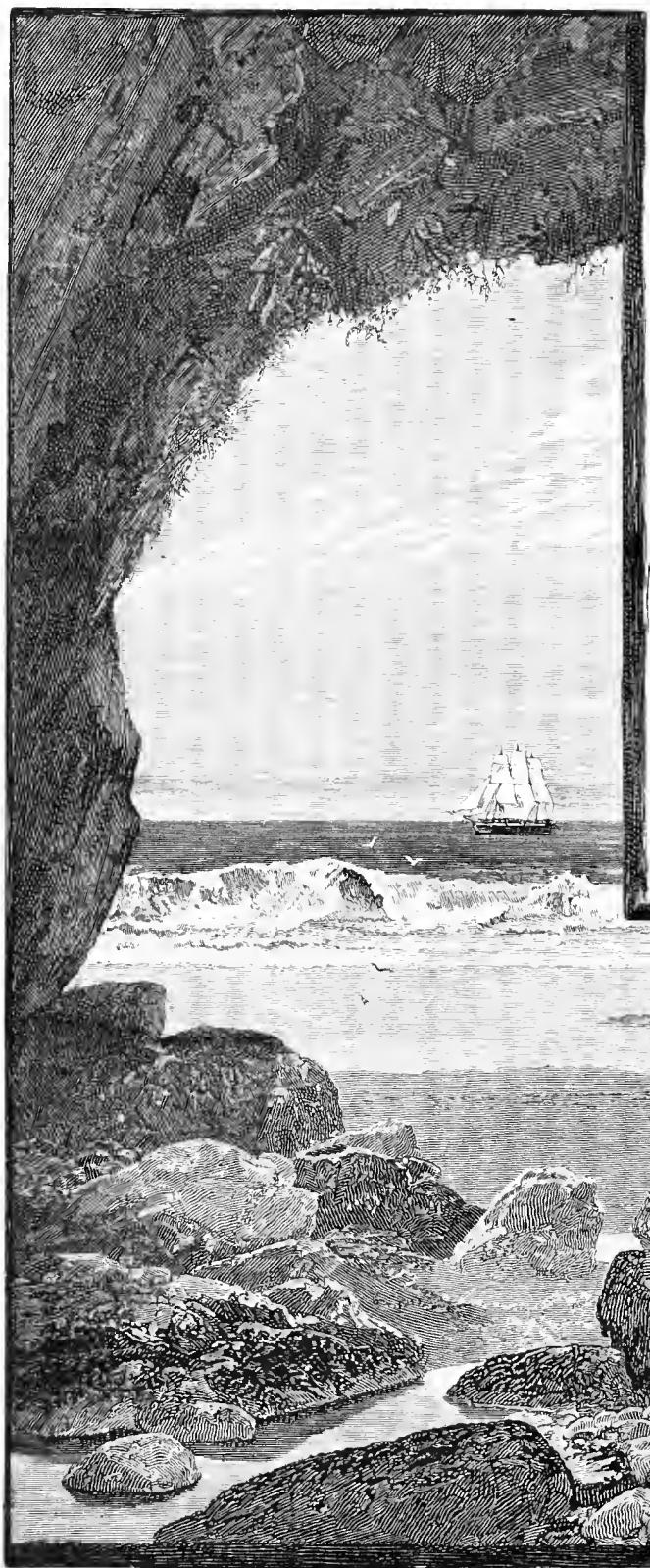
"**O**H ! daisy, what are you good for, pray,
If you do not tell me the truth to-day,
As I count your leaves as white as snow,
To see whether somebody loves—or no?"

Softly she stole from her friends apart,
With a dimpling cheek and a fluttering heart,
To scatter the daisy leaves so white,
And test their charm for the wrong or right.

"**H**e loves—loves not—he loves'—ah ! yes,
Dear little daisy, the truth confess ;
But I'll know you're wrong should your leaves say
‘No !’
He loves—for his eyes have told me so."

So over and over the words were said,
Till the last white leaf from the stalk had fled ;
But the secret hid in her heart none knew
Till she whispered it to her lover true.





TWILIGHT ON THE BEACH.

THE crimson glory of the setting sun
Hath lain a moment on the ocean's breast,
Till twilight shadows, gathering one by one,
Bring us the tidings, day is gone to rest.

Far out upon the waters, like a veil,
The mists of evening rise and stretch away
Between the horizon and the distant sail,
And earth and sea are clothed in sombre gray.

The tide comes higher up the smooth, wide beach,
Singing the song it has for ages sung;
Recedes, and carries far beyond our reach
The freight my idle hands have seaward flung.

Over the white-capped waves the sea-gulls soar
With heavy-flapping wing and restless cry,
As darkness spreads its deeper mantle o'er
The changing shadows of the twilight sky.

No voice but mine to mingle with the sound
Of ocean's melody—as one by one
The stars light up the vast concave around,
And live the glory that is never done.

Still higher creeps the tide with subtle power,
And still the waves advance with sullen roar;
But with the last faint gleam of twilight hour
I turn me homeward from the lonely shore.





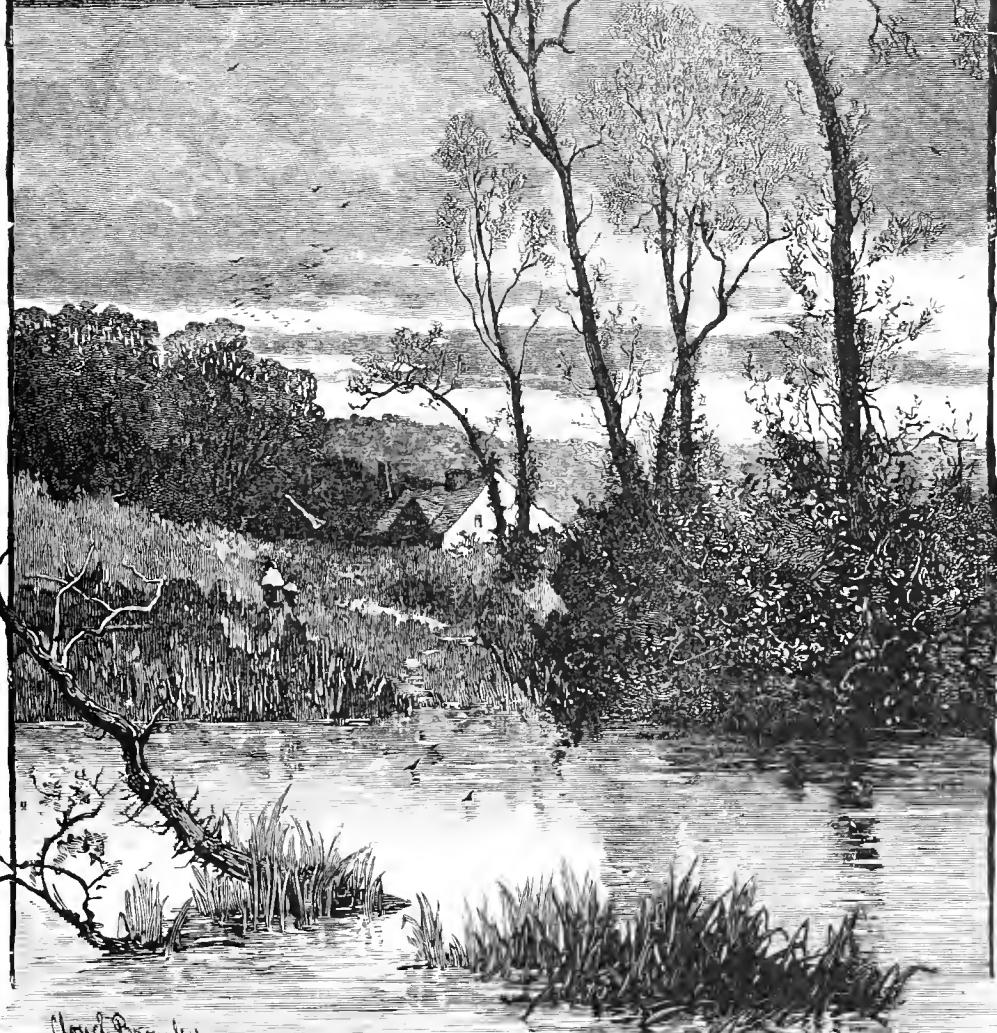
THE MATIN BELLS.

O H! Matin Bells, which cheerily
Ring out your morning song,
Would that I were a boy again,
With heart and will so strong,
To battle with the cares of life,
Life's duties well to do,
And—as in those dear days of youth—
To faith and hope be true.

I seem again to hear the call
Which ye did send afar,
As brighter grew the Eastern skies
Around the morning star.
And sweet and clear your echoes ring
Throughout my careworn heart,
Till age is lost in dreams of youth,
Which newer strength impart.

THE AWAKENING

HOW fair it comes, the wonderful hour
When nature from sleep awakes,
And over the face of the earth at last
A new-born gladness breaks!
The stars grow pale in the shadowy sky,
And over the mountains creep,
The mists that are part of the waking world,
And part of the earth's sweet sleep.
The restless birds in the tree-tops high
Are shaking their wings at last,
And chirp, and twitter their songs of praise,
As the dawn comes on so fast.
But who can tell of the wondrous charm,
When over the distant hills
The day's bright king in his glory comes
And the earth with radiance fills?
Now scatter, ye mists, from the mountain-side,
And die in the sky's soft blue;
For the dawn has passed, and the day is here,
With its light and joy so true.

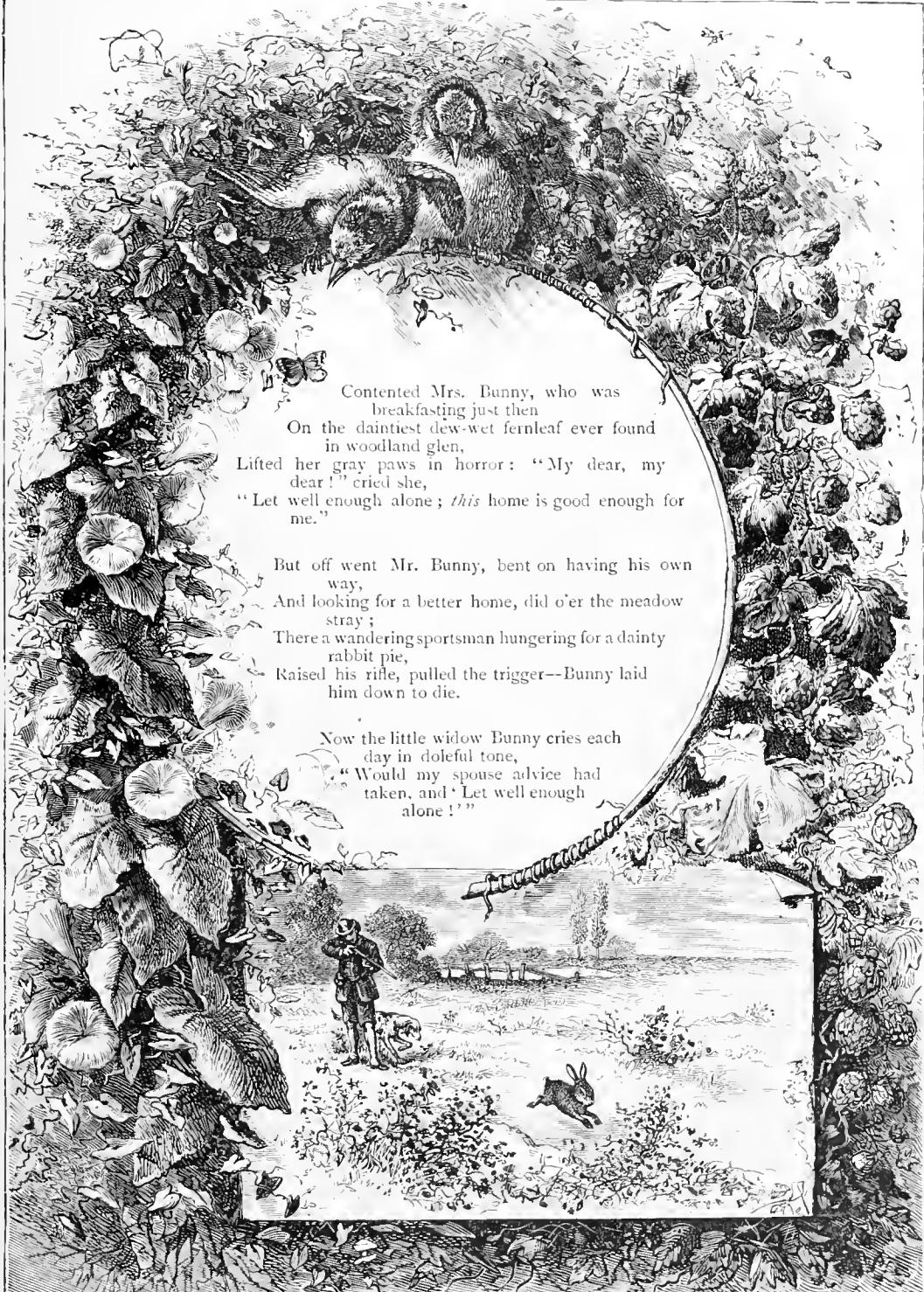


Wendy Bramley



"LET WELL ENOUGH ALONE."

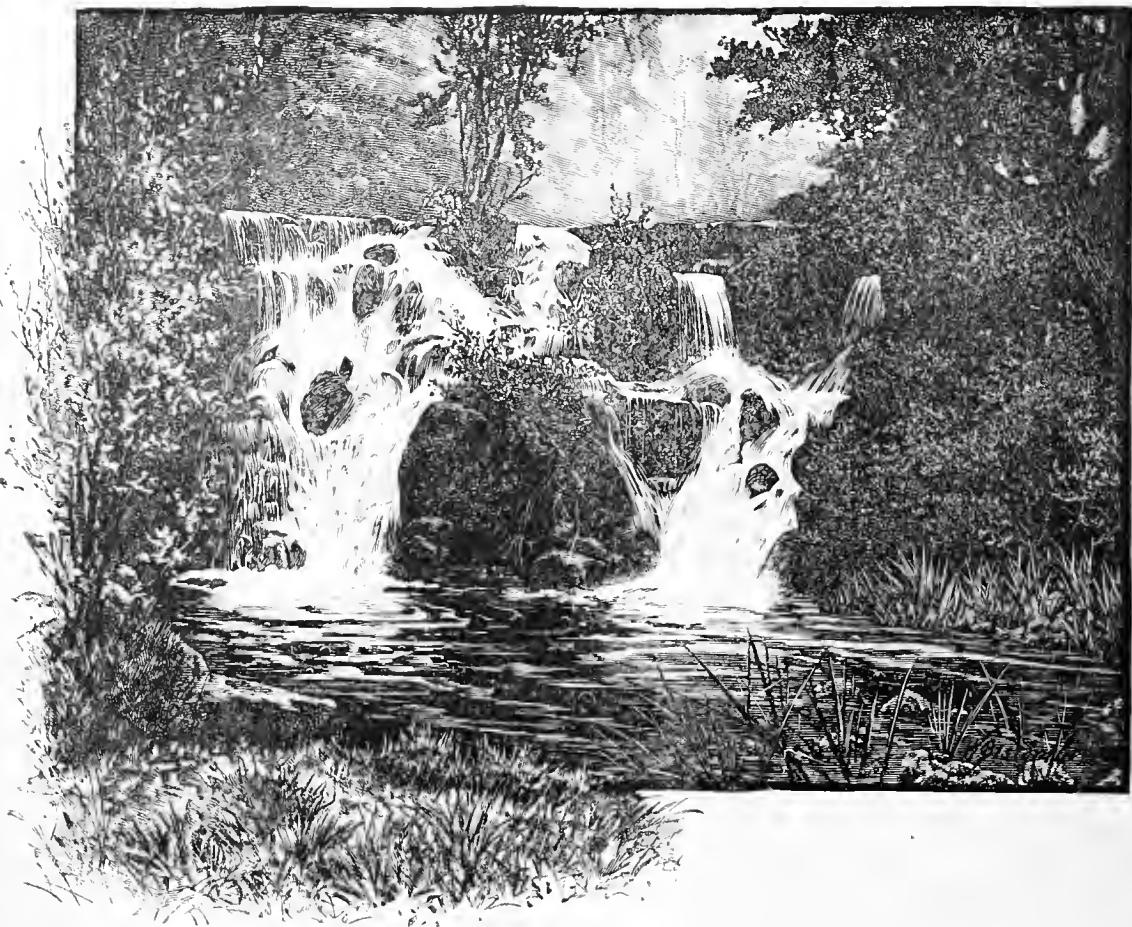
"**M**Y dear," said Mr. Bunny, on a pleasant summer day,
"I'll go and take a look at things outside and far away
From this dull home of ours, where we've lived too long, you see--
Perchance I'll find a livelier place, my dear, for you and me."



Contented Mrs. Bunny, who was
breakfasting just then
On the daintiest dew-wet fernleaf ever found
in woodland glen,
Lifted her gray paws in horror: "My dear, my
dear!" cried she,
"Let well enough alone; *this* home is good enough for
me."

But off went Mr. Bunny, bent on having his own
way,
And looking for a better home, did o'er the meadow
stray;
There a wandering sportsman hungering for a dainty
rabbit pie,
Raised his rifle, pulled the trigger--Bunny laid
him down to die.

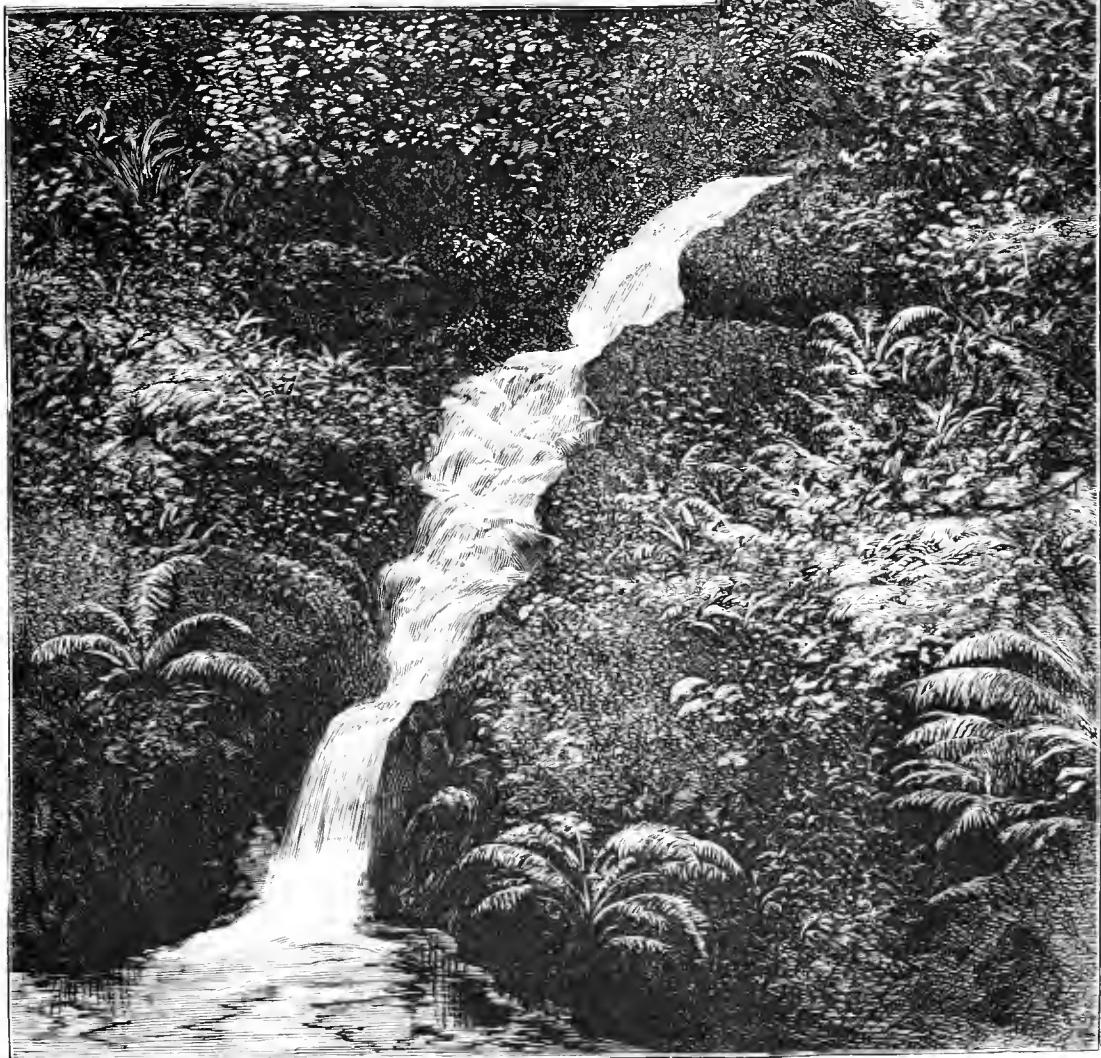
Now the little widow Bunny cries each
day in doleful tone,
"Would my spouse advice had
taken, and 'Let well enough
alone!'"

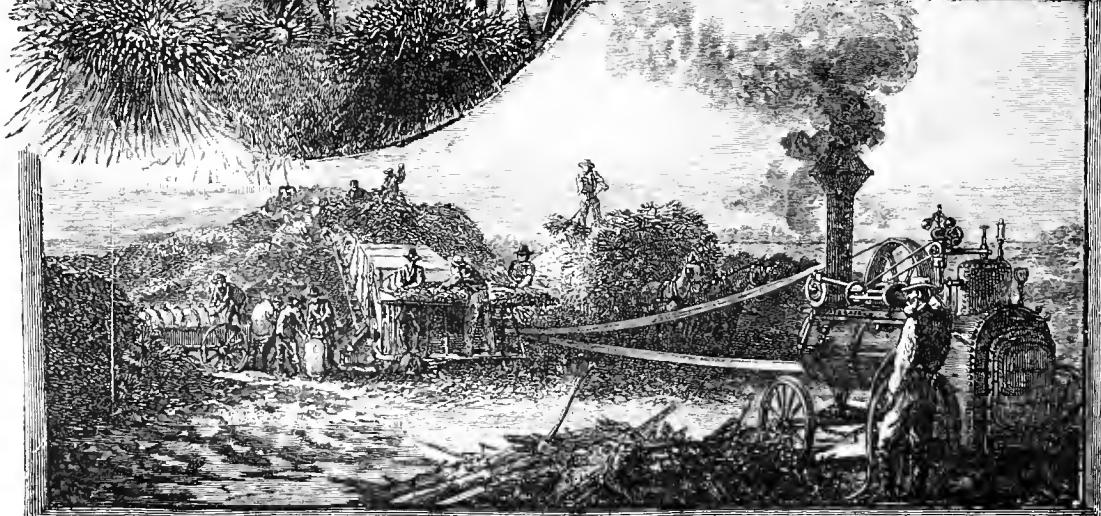


THE CASCADES.

ALL day long they rush and roar,
And sing their mad song o'er and o'er ;
All night long they roar and rush,
And the deep forest's solemn hush
Disturb, as down the mountain-side,
Now like a rivulet, then wide,
And wider still, they take their way
'Neath sunlight and thro' shadows gray.
Thro' day and night, as years go by,
Heedless of storm or summer sky,
Unmindful of *our* smiles or tears,
Unmindful of *our* hopes and fears,

Living their own wild lives so free,
And singing their own songs merrily,
Now plunging swift o'er rock and crag,
Now creeping steadily among
The ferns and grasses by the way,
Then broadening till their foam is flung
At last adown the terraced bank,
Where cling the tangled vines so sweet,
Leaping from stone to stone until
Their lives the river-waters meet,
And wrestling with the currents there,
At last the river's burdens share.





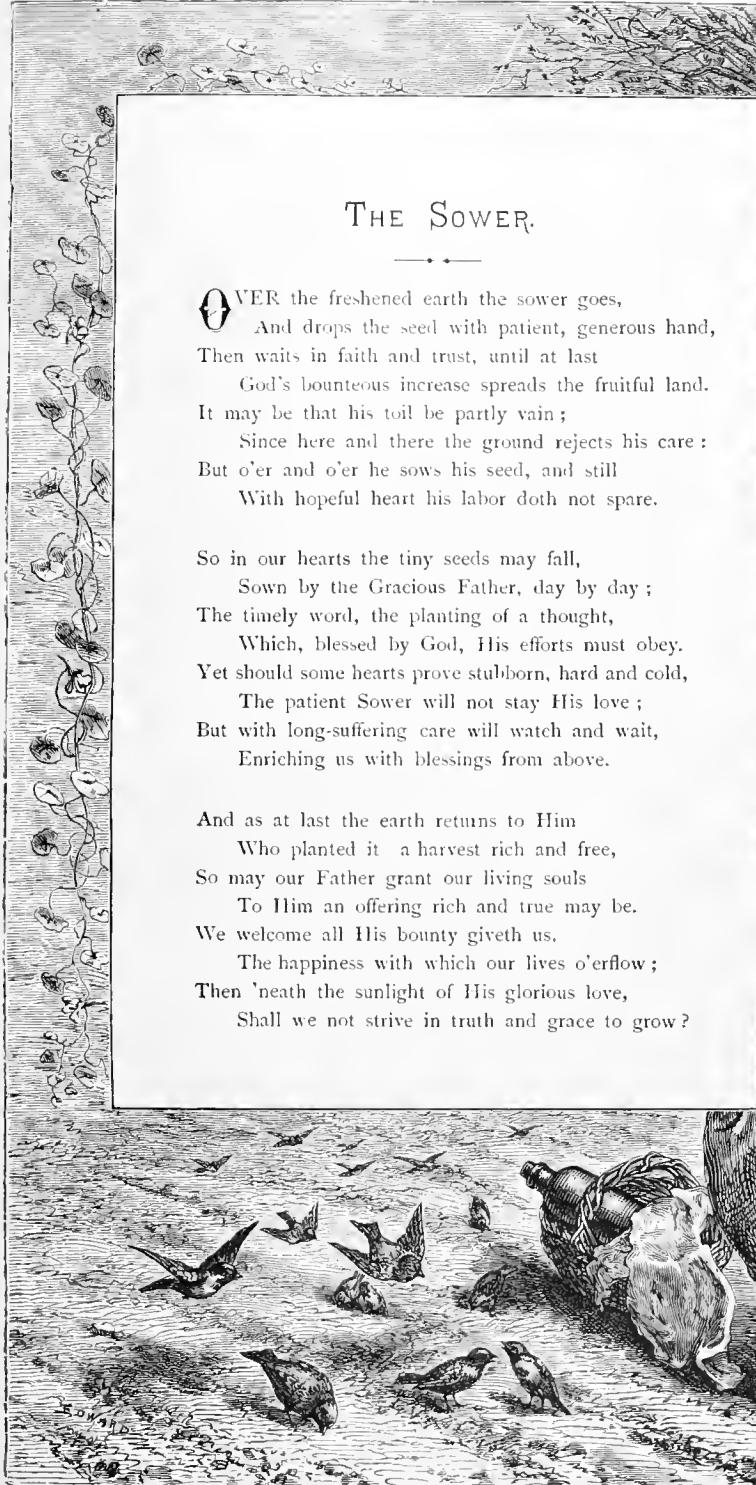
THE SOWER.

— — —

OVER the freshened earth the sower goes,
And drops the seed with patient, generous hand,
Then waits in faith and trust, until at last
God's bounteous increase spreads the fruitful land.
It may be that his toil be partly vain ;
Since here and there the ground rejects his care :
But o'er and o'er he sows his seed, and still
With hopeful heart his labor doth not spare.

So in our hearts the tiny seeds may fall,
Sown by the Gracious Father, day by day ;
The timely word, the planting of a thought,
Which, blessed by God, His efforts must obey.
Yet should some hearts prove stubborn, hard and cold,
The patient Sower will not stay His love ;
But with long-suffering care will watch and wait,
Enriching us with blessings from above.

And as at last the earth returns to Him
Who planted it a harvest rich and free,
So may our Father grant our living souls
To Him an offering rich and true may be.
We welcome all His bounty giveth us.
The happiness with which our lives o'erflow ;
Then 'neath the sunlight of His glorious love,
Shall we not strive in truth and grace to grow ?





THE HARVEST SHEAF.

HERE'S a lonely sheaf on the harvest field
That weary hands have bound,
And left for many a day and night
Alone on the stony ground.
Some tired heart must have vainly looked
For a harvest of peace and love;
To gather at last but the hopes that died,
'Neath the clouds which gathered above.

All over the world there are harvest fields,
And in some the reapers are gay;
In others the sowers with tear-blind eyes
Turn empty-handed away.
Oh! Summer, why scatter thy sunbeams
bright
Only for *some* who sow,
While there are hearts where the grains of
joy
Are struggling thro' *clouds* to grow?

But the lonely sheaf in the harvest field,
That some weary hand has bound,
Will stand thro' shadow, and cloud, and
rain,
Alone on the rugged ground,
Till the patient worker himself grows ripe
For the harvest of heaven above,
And is gathered home by the Father's
hand,
And saved by the Father's love.



AT EVENTIDE.

YES, one more kiss, sweet baby mine,
Ere sleep shall close those eyes so bright,
One more warm kiss, then sleep, dear lamb,
Till once more come the morning's light.
The shadows which about us lie
Do not distress thee, baby dear,
For tho' the gloom may gather fast,
Thou knowest *mother* watches near.

Oh ! faith of childhood, pure, undimmed !
Oh ! trust by mother ne'er betrayed,
Oh ! sweet dependence, helpless love,
And hopes on *mother* ever stayed !
Thus as I kneeled at baby's side,
And as I look in baby's eyes,
I also turn for rest and love
To Him who watches from the skies.

As tenderly by night and day
His arms enfold me, this I know,
As mine thus clasp in gratitude
His gift, the child I cherish so.
And, oh ! tho' shadows deepen fast,
I will not fear tho' dark the night,
For His true eyes keep loving watch,
And somewhere waits the morning light.



THE FRESH AIR FUND.

"COME one! come all!" the farmer cries,
With a hearty welcome in voice and eyes;
"The fields are wide, and the flowers are free,
And the breezes are blowing right merrily;
And there's plenty of sunshine to be had
For browning the cheeks of each lassie and
lad."

Oh! fast the little pale cheeks grow brown,
As the golden sunbeams come tumbling down
To help the breezes which kiss so sweet
Each lad and lassie they chance to meet.
And the jolly old farmer cries, "Oh! oh!
At last the *dimples* begin to grow!"

There's never a bird but seems to sing
His happy song with a merrier ring,
Because of the ears which love to hear,
And the echoing voices so glad and clear.
And the farmer says to his wife, "Tis plain
A happiness shared is doubled again!"

Oh! the "Fresh Air Fund!" may its years be
long,
Its friends be many, its influence strong;
For fields are many, and flowers are free,
And the *lambs* of God's flock should joyous be.
And God holds ever the "Helping Hands"
That labour at home or in distant lands.





"HEAVINESS ENDURETH BUT FOR A NIGHT,
JOY COMETH IN THE MORNING."

WHAT tho' the night be starless, and sad, and cold,
and drear,
We know the moments passing bring *morning*
yet more near;
We know the cloud of darkness is only for the night,
That daylight in its dawning may only seem more bright.

What tho' our hearts are laden with many a load of pain,
We know the hand that gives them will lift them off again;
We know that tho' so weary we're fain to weep for grief,
The light of God's own promise will surely give relief.

The night of sorrow lingering may seem to us *so long*
But God for all the darkness will make the light full strong;
And as we turn to welcome the first faint ray of light,
How soon the morning's sunshine will make our sad
hearts bright!



THE LIVING SPRING.

LIKE the ever-living spring
Whose waters freely flow
Tho' lake and river, brook and stream,
Are sealed by winter's snow :

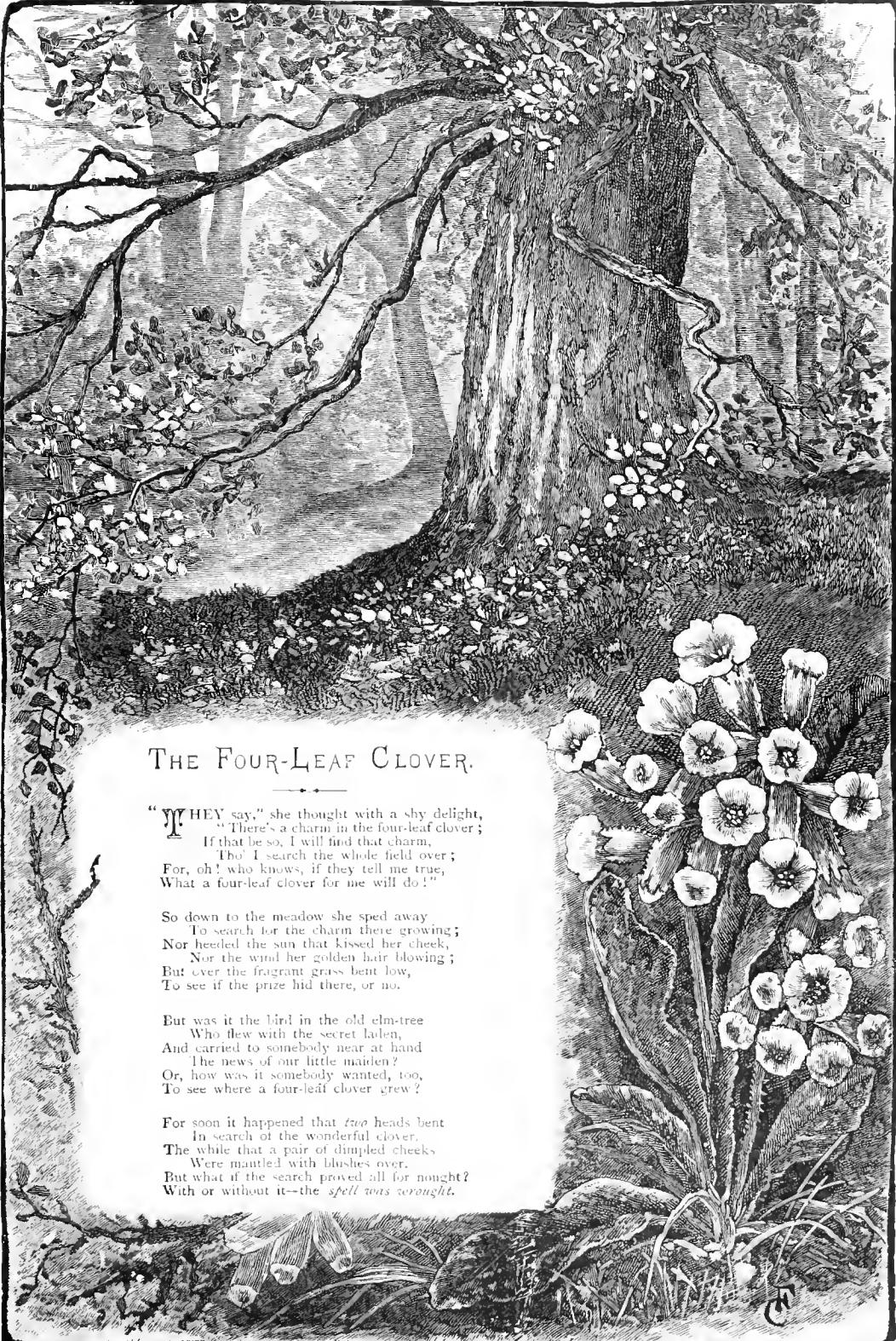
So Christ's most precious promises
Refresh my thirsty heart,
And, as I drink, the waters clear
New strength and aid impart.

By night and day the fountain flows,
Nor storm, nor icy sleet
Can bind or check the steady flow
Of its cool waters sweet :

So Christ His love most freely gives
To those who thirst for life,
And all who drink, new strength will feel,
Come care—come woe—come strife.







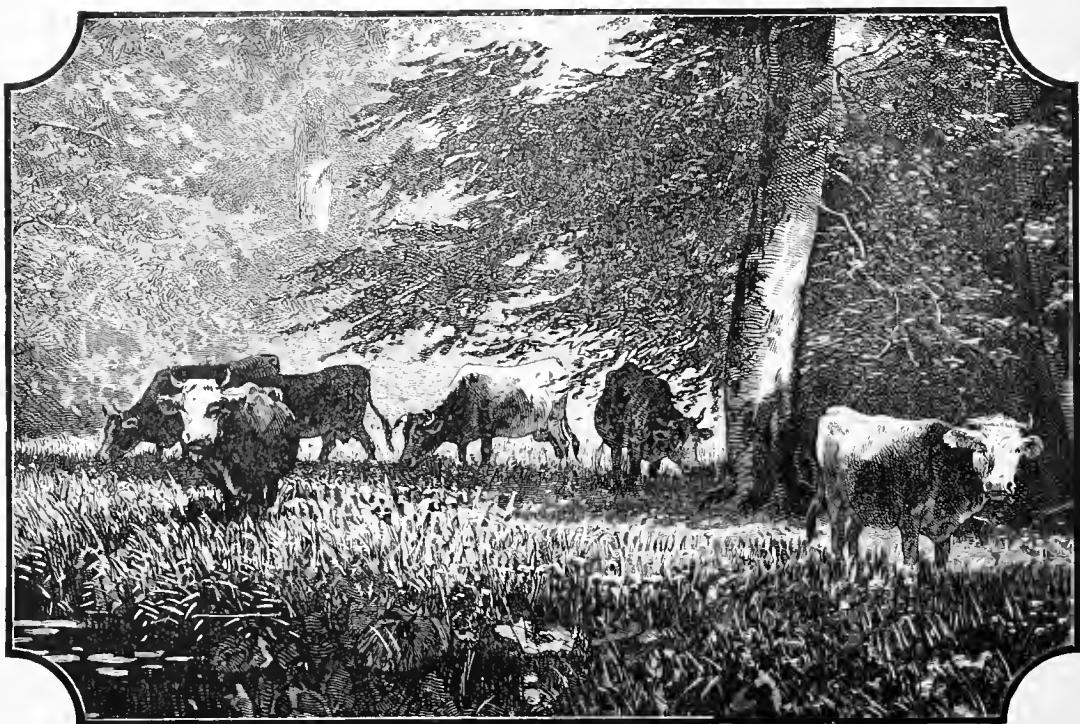
THE FOUR-LEAF CLOVER.

"**M**HEY say," she thought with a shy delight,
 "There's a charm in the four-leaf clover;
 If that be so, I will find that charm,
 Tho' I search the whole field over;
For, oh! who knows, if they tell me true,
 What a four-leaf clover for me will do!"

So down to the meadow she sped away.
 To search for the charm there growing;
Nor heeded the sun that kissed her cheek,
 Nor the wind her golden hair blowing;
But over the fragrant grass bent low,
 To see if the prize hid there, or no.

But was it the bird in the old elm-tree
 Who flew with the secret lulen,
And carried to somebody near at hand
 The news of our little maiden?
Or, how was it somebody wanted, too,
 To see where a four-leaf clover grew?

For soon it happened that *two* heads bent
 In search of the wonderful clover.
The while that a pair of dimpled cheeks
 Were mantled with blushes over,
But what if the search proved all for nought?
 With or without it--the *spell was wrought*.



GOING AFTER THE COWS.

"JENNIE!" mother cries, "Jen-nie!
Why, where in the world can Jennie be?
She went for the cows an hour ago.
What ails the girl that she lingers so?"

The sun goes down in the crimson west,
The tired day prepares for rest,
And the laggard moments slowly pass,
But bring no news of the truant lass.

"What ails the girl?" The sober cows,
Stopping along the fields to browse,
May look in vain from side to side,
And wait the voice of their pretty guide.

For far behind, by the pasture gate,
Jennie—and Jamie—forget 'tis late,
Forget the cows, and the milking hour,
And everything else, save love's sweet power.

The lengthening shadows unheeded fall
The whip-poor-will with his plaintive call,
The gathering dews, and the darkening sky—
All warn in vain as the minutes fly.

Twice and thrice does mother go
To the farmhouse door, ere she hears the low
Of the cows, as they trample up the lane,
And the ring of the cow-bells, clear and plain.

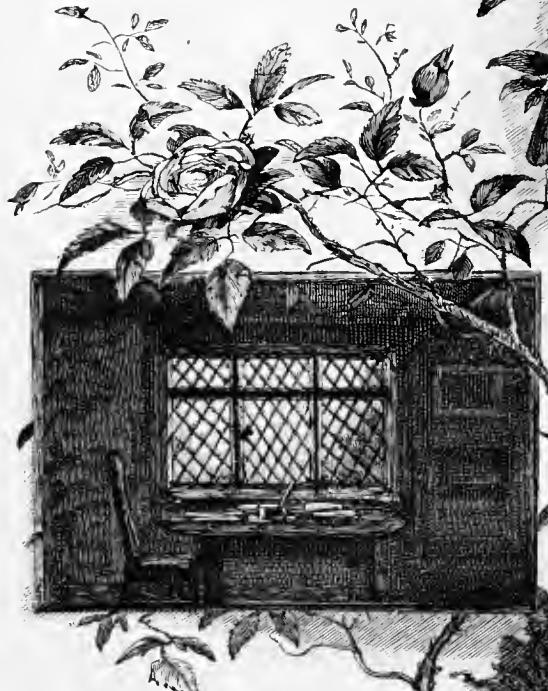
But presently come the laggard feet
Of Jennie and Jamie. Oh! shyly sweet
Are the girl's blue eyes as she stands before
The mother, who meets her at the door.

"What kept you so, my child?" "I?—Oh!
I was going after the cows, you know."
Then whispered Jamie, "Whatever you do,
Den't tell her that I—*went after you!*"



THE VIOLETS.

O-DAY I saw the violet-girl, with sad
and wistful eyes ;
She stands there by the corner, and "Sweet
violets!" she cries.
From early morn till evening she wanders
thro' the street—
Poor little violet-seller—with tired hands
and feet !

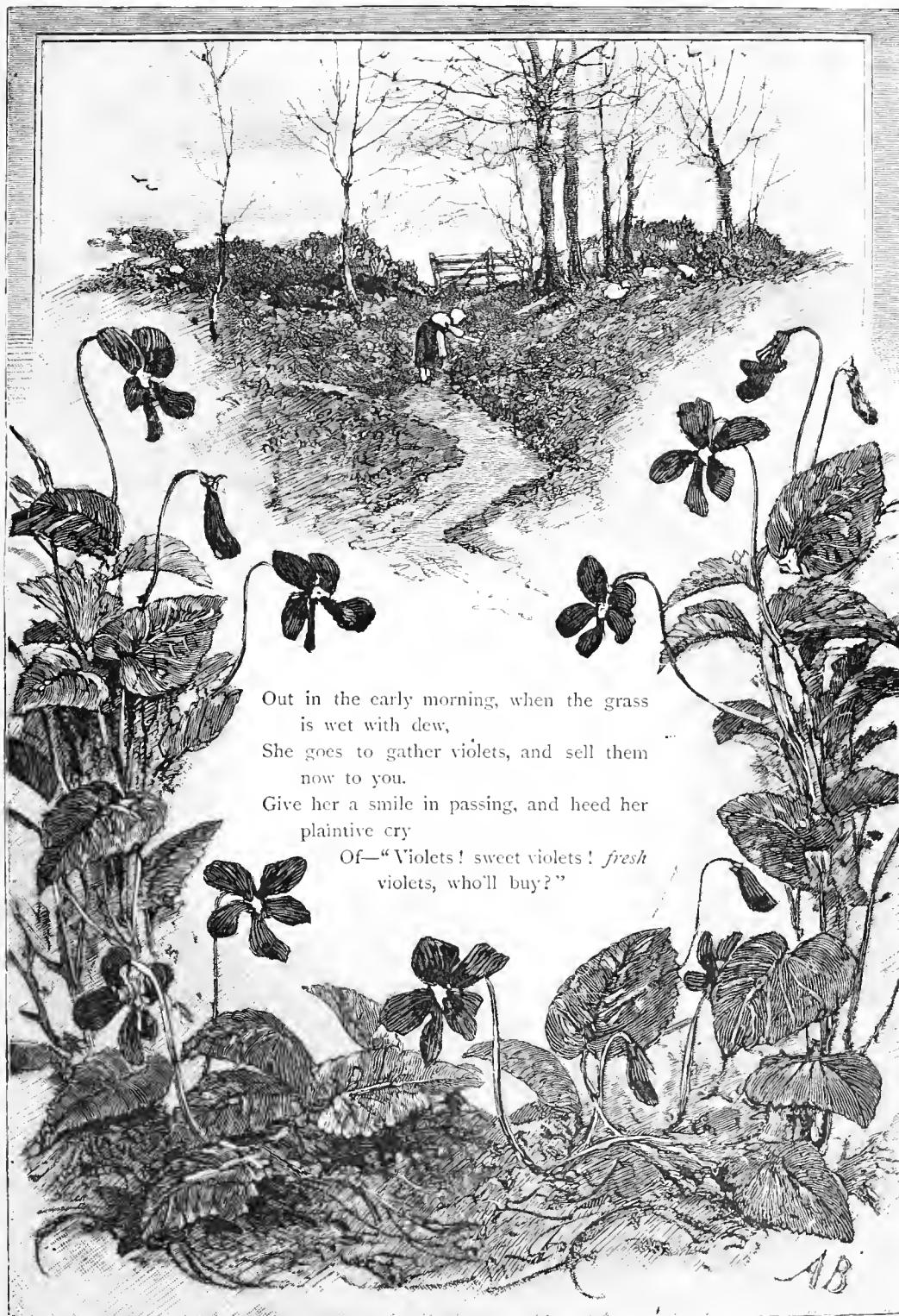


Only a violet-seller ! Oh ! ye children
who are glad,
Spare kindly words and glances to the
child whose heart is sad :
Poor patient little Maggie, with no
mother's kiss to bless,
No mother's arms to hold her in a sweet
and fond caress !



The flowers in her basket—the violets
of Spring—
Their sweet and subtle fragrance on
the air are scattering.
How she lifts them up to view as
the people jostle by,
And "Violets ! sweet violets !" is still
her plaintive cry.



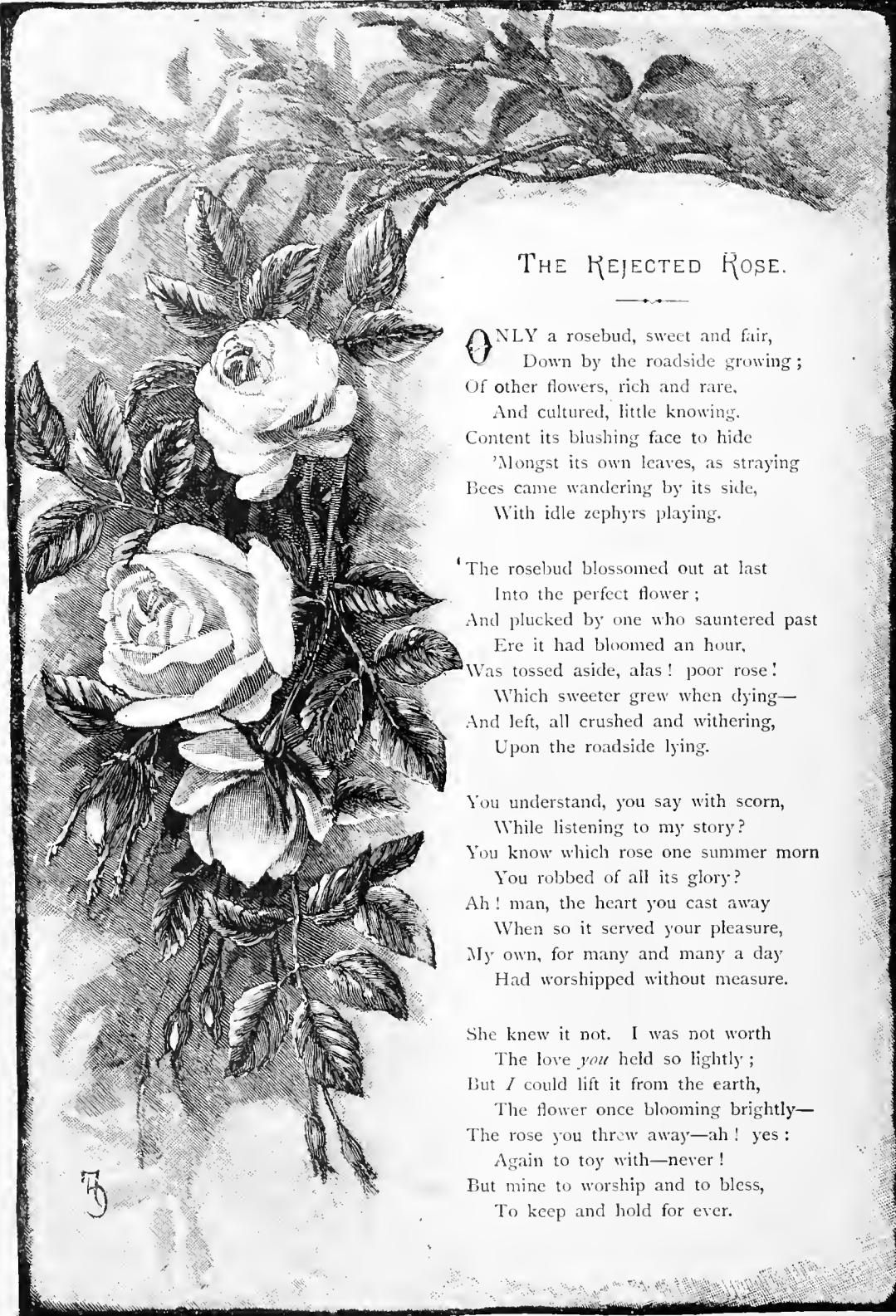


Out in the early morning, when the grass
is wet with dew,

She goes to gather violets, and sell them
now to you.

Give her a smile in passing, and heed her
plaintive cry

Of—"Violets! sweet violets! fresh
violets, wh'll buy?"



THE REJECTED ROSE.

O NLY a rosebud, sweet and fair,
Down by the roadside growing ;
Of other flowers, rich and rare,
And cultured, little knowing.
Content its blushing face to hide
'Mongst its own leaves, as straying
Bees came wandering by its side,
With idle zephyrs playing.

The rosebud blossomed out at last
Into the perfect flower ;
And plucked by one who sauntered past
Ere it had bloomed an hour,
Was tossed aside, alas ! poor rose !
Which sweeter grew when dying—
And left, all crushed and withering,
Upon the roadside lying.

You understand, you say with scorn,
While listening to my story ?
You know which rose one summer morn
You robbed of all its glory ?
Ah ! man, the heart you cast away
When so it served your pleasure,
My own, for many and many a day
Had worshipped without measure.

She knew it not. I was not worth
The love *you* held so lightly ;
But *I* could lift it from the earth,
The flower once blooming brightly—
The rose you threw away—ah ! yes :
Again to toy with—never !
But mine to worship and to bless,
To keep and hold for ever.





THE CLOSE OF DAY.

THE mantle of darkness is spread o'er the sky,
The last gleam of twilight is fading away,
And night, in advancing, her golden-starred veil
Has quietly laid o'er the face of the day ;
While the dew, or the tears of the day which is done,
Fall softly on earth, on each flower and spray.

2.
And what of the hours that since the bright morn
Have gathered the harvest of one day of life ?
Were they laden with deeds that were kindly and true,
And fit to soar skyward ? Or were they but rife
With thoughts born of sorrow, and hearts that were weak
From battling away amid trouble and strife ?

3.
'Tis said—and the saying brings comfort, we know—
That with twilight some angel draws pityingly near
To cover our woes with a sheltering wing,
And ease every heart of its burthen of fear,
And bear to the world far beyond the dark clouds
The prayers that are prayed amid many a tear.

4.

Or, if only gladness has fall'n to our lot,
 To help us be thankful, the dear angel steals
 Close—close to our hearts, till she enters within,
 And life's sweetest blessings more truly reveals.
 And the heart with new fervour looks upward in peace,
 And the spirit, grown humble, at heaven's gate
 kneels.

5.

We can fancy ourselves at the feet of our Lord ;
 We can feel on our brows the dear touch of
 His hand ;



6.

"To each life," says the poet, "some sorrow must
 come ;"
 Aye! but clouds soon are lifted, and after the
 rain,
 And after the weeping, and after the woe,

We can breathe in His ear all our full hearts may
 hold,
 Be the thoughts what we will, He will well under-
 stand
 All the longings, the yearnings ; and all will be *peace*
 In the soul that is trusting, at Jesus' command.

7.

Whatever the burden the hours may bear
 Away with the day that has flown into space,
 May the hour of twilight bring comfort to all,
 And the mantle of darkness leave never a trace
 Of its own heavy shadow, when morning shall dawn,
 And a new day arise with a smile on its face.



THE MEADOW LAKE.

A BROAD expanse of water rippling bright,
And dimpling into sparkles 'neath the light
Of a fair summer day, a golden day
With which the sunbeams and the shadows play ;
While on the hill-sides merrily the breeze
Is singing its sweet song amongst the trees,
Or, mad with frolic, 'neath the azure skies
To dip its pinions in the lake it hies.

Along the wooded shore the wavelets creep,
Singing the ferns and nodding grass to sleep ;
Kissing the grim old rocks till one by one
They shine and glisten 'neath the noonday sun.
The boats, which lazily swing to and fro,
Keep time to lullabies so soft and low,
Which round their keels the rippling waters sing
From morn till night, with love unwearying.

Now here, now there, from many a woodside tree
We hear the call of birds, and gleefully
The music of their song sweet echoes make
Across the bosom of the quiet lake.
Far off, beneath the shadow of the shore,
Some merry rower drops awhile his oar,
And faintly o'er the waters, sweet and clear,
The echo of his boat-song we may hear.

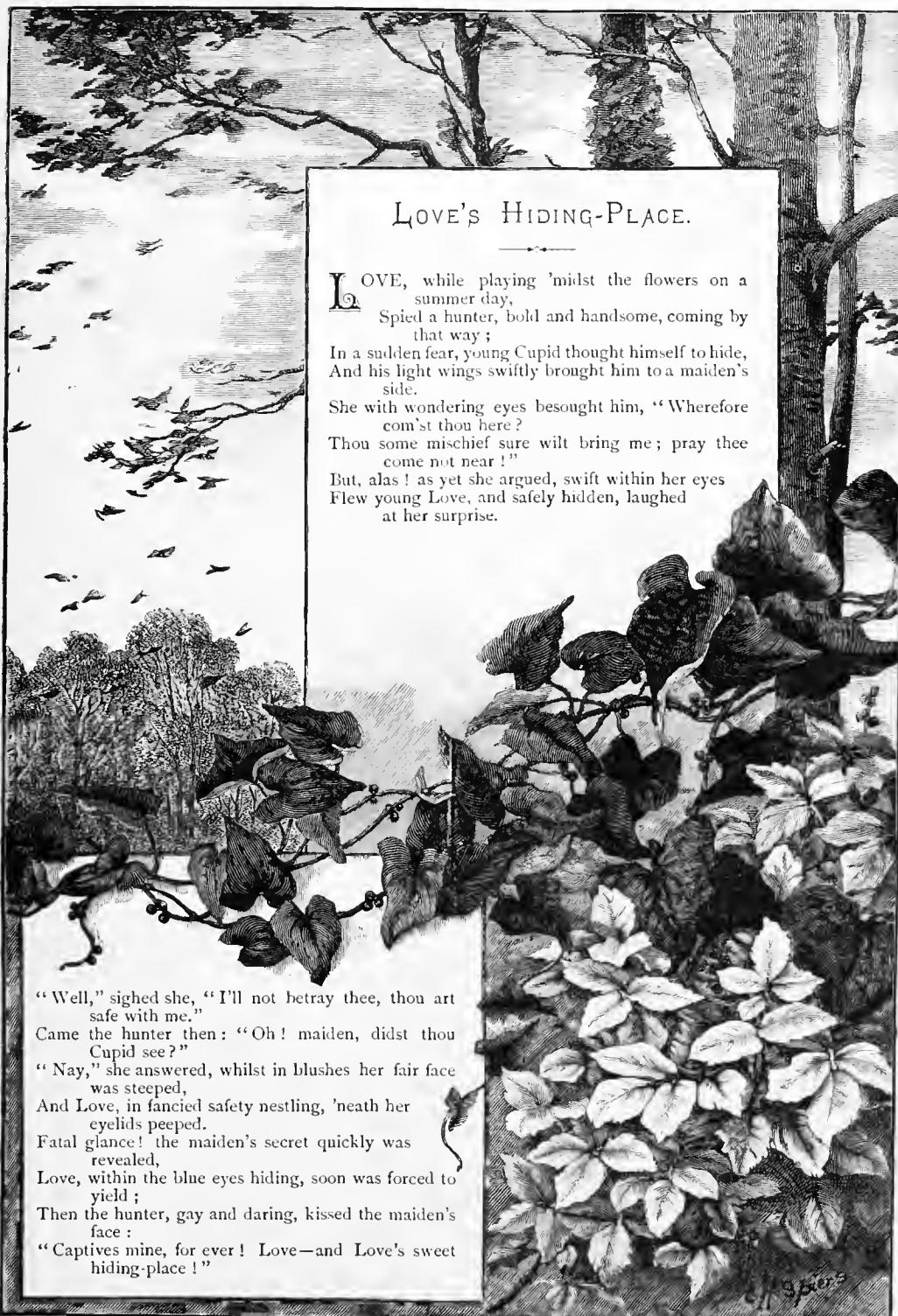
O ! fair, sweet lake, all diamond-crowned, and gay
With the sweet blessing of the summer day ;
Thou perfect picture from the Master's hand ;
Thou fairest of all spots on sea or land ;
Shut in by hills which bathe their staunch old feet
In thy cool wavelets : kissed by zephyrs sweet
And guarded by the soft blue sky above,
No wonder that thy memory I love !

Far, far away from thee my path must lie,
Apart from wooded hill and full free sky ;
Apart from shady glen and ferny road ;
Apart from Nature's fearless, loving code.
But in my heart thy memory I shall hold
Till memory and sense grow worn and old ;
And many a silent echo will awake
Itself within my heart, fair meadow lake.





A. HAVERS.





TO THE END OF THE CHAPTER.

"Even to your old age I am He ;
and even to hoar hairs will I carry
you ; I have made, and I will bear;
even I will carry, and will deliver
you." (Isa. xlvi. 4.)

THE light is dim in the western skies,
And dim the light in the aged eyes ;
But the end of the chapter is so near,
And the truths of the chapter are so dear,
She must read to the close—till the light goes past,
And life has vanished from day at last.

And then with reverent hands she'll lay
The Book for a little while away ;
And in the peace of her quiet room,
Sit restfully thro' the twilight's gloom,
Busy with thoughts that come and go,
Like flitting shadows, to and fro.

"Even to her old age," ah ! yes,
She has proven its truth and tenderness ;
She has known her Lord thro' her many years,
She has trusted her Lord thro' hopes and fears ;
She has felt His strength from her youth till now,
When the hairs are "*hoar*" above her brow.

He has borne her safely thro' floods of woe,
He has made her daily His care to know,
And her faithful heart, in its humble trust,
Feels all He does to be wise and just ;
For "*He will deliver*," come grief and pain,
And after the clouds send light again.

The dear Lord ruleth her life each day,
And now when cometh the twilight gray
He still will read with His tender eyes,
So long as there's light in the western skies,
To the end of the chapter ; then His breast
Will give to the ransomed soul its rest.





THE FISHER'S DAUGHTER.

WITH the first faint streak of the day-dawn
She looks from her window's height,
For the fierce, wild rage of the sea is past,
And gone the blackness of night.
With the first faint flush of the sunrise
The tears in her eyes are dried,
For she sees the sail of her father's boat,
And over the distance wide
Her heart a welcome is sending,
Making her glad eyes bright;
"Thank God," she cries, "that he comes unharmed
From the dangers of the night!"

Oh! wild was the cruel tempest,
And loud was the angry roar

Of the midnight storm and the giant waves
As they lashed the lonely shore.
And timid the heart of the maiden
Who watched the long hours away,
In dread lest the life she loved go out
Ere the dawn of the coming day.
"And, oh! should I lose thee, father!"
She cried in her agony,
"Nor joy nor gladness ever again,
Nor safety shall be for me!"

But now to the morning's breezes
She gaily flingeth her fears,
For the day-dawn shines on the spreading sails,
And the cool winds dry her tears.
No more she fears for the future,
For "father" is close at hand,
And all forgotten the night will be
When she touches that father's hand.

Oh! what if we lose "Our Father,"
What if we lose His care?
What if we fail to watch for Him
With never-ceasing prayer?
What if the darkness hide Him,
The darkness of wilful sin?
And the tempest beats, and the night grows wild,
And our lives are black within?
Oh! what should we know of safety?
Where should we turn for rest,
If never again in Faith we could lay
Our heads on the Father's breast?

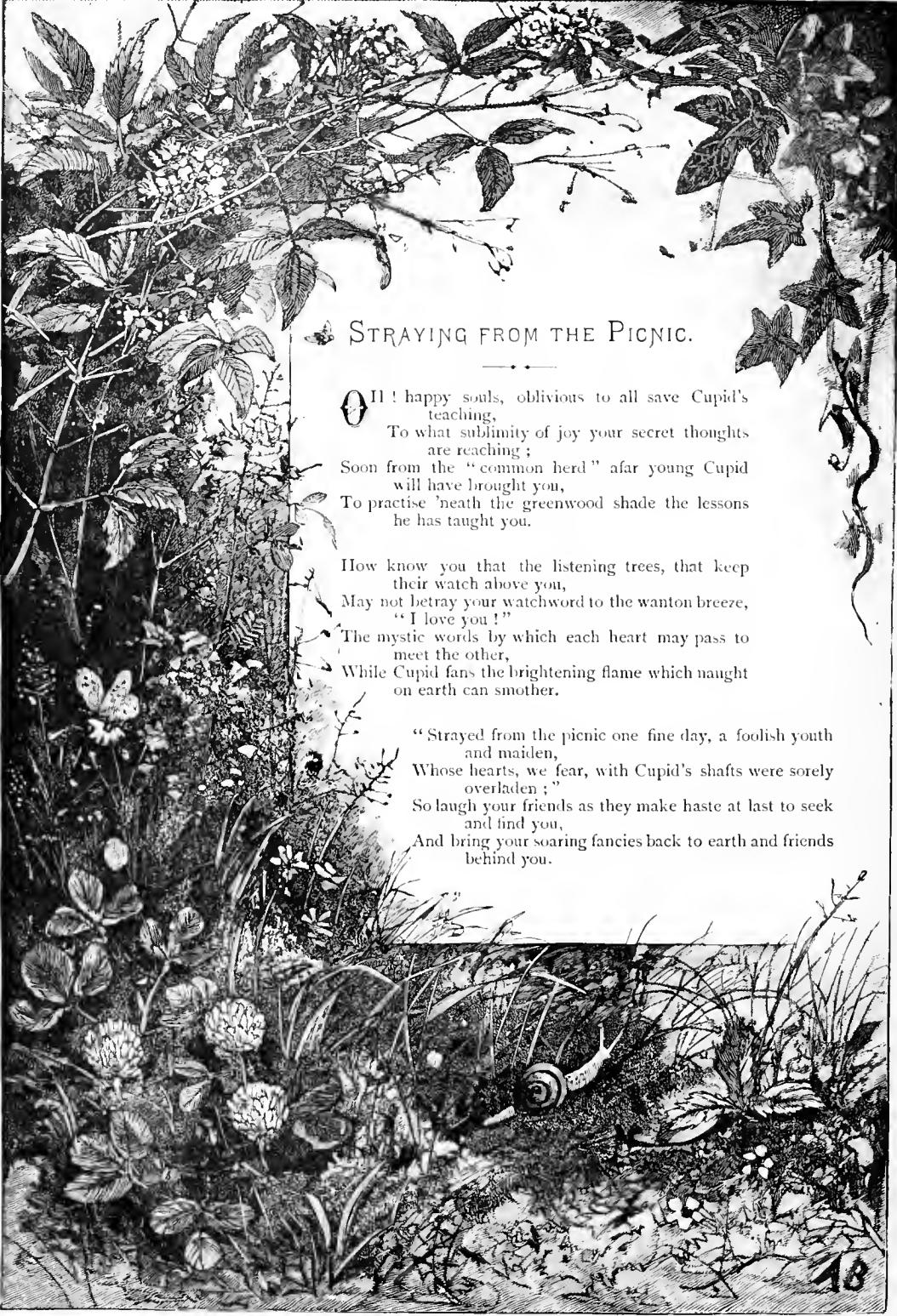
Let us watch and pray till He cometh
Safe out of the mist and rain,
And out of the doubt that clouds our hearts,
To gladden our lives again.
And we'll watch for the coming day-dawn,
When clouds and sorrow shall rise,
And the sight of the "Father" we long to see
Shall dry the tears in our eyes.

NOVEMBER.

BLOW, but sure, the enemy comes,
His breath we may almost feel,
And the flowers of earth must yield their lives—
'Neath the tread of his frosty heel.
The flower-queen from her throne has stepped,
And bowed her stately head,
And the leaves of Autumn have fallen fast,
To cover the lovely dead.

Over the skies a cloud is cast,
And the breeze is sharp and cold,
And the landscape pining for summer friends,
Grows sad, and wrinkled, and old.
Ah ! drear November, make short thy reign,
And take thyself away ;
Better we like—if Summer must die—
The jolly king *Winter's* sway.





STRAYING FROM THE PICNIC.

O ! happy souls, oblivious to all save Cupid's teaching,
To what sublimity of joy your secret thoughts are reaching ;
Soon from the "common herd" afar young Cupid will have brought you,
To practise 'neath the greenwood shade the lessons he has taught you.

How know you that the listening trees, that keep their watch above you,
May not betray your watchword to the wanton breeze,
"I love you!"
The mystic words by which each heart may pass to meet the other,
While Cupid fans the brightening flame which naught on earth can smother.

"Strayed from the picnic one fine day, a foolish youth and maiden,
Whose hearts, we fear, with Cupid's shafts were sorely overladen ;"
So laugh your friends as they make haste at last to seek and find you,
And bring your soaring fancies back to earth and friends behind you.



W HATHERELL



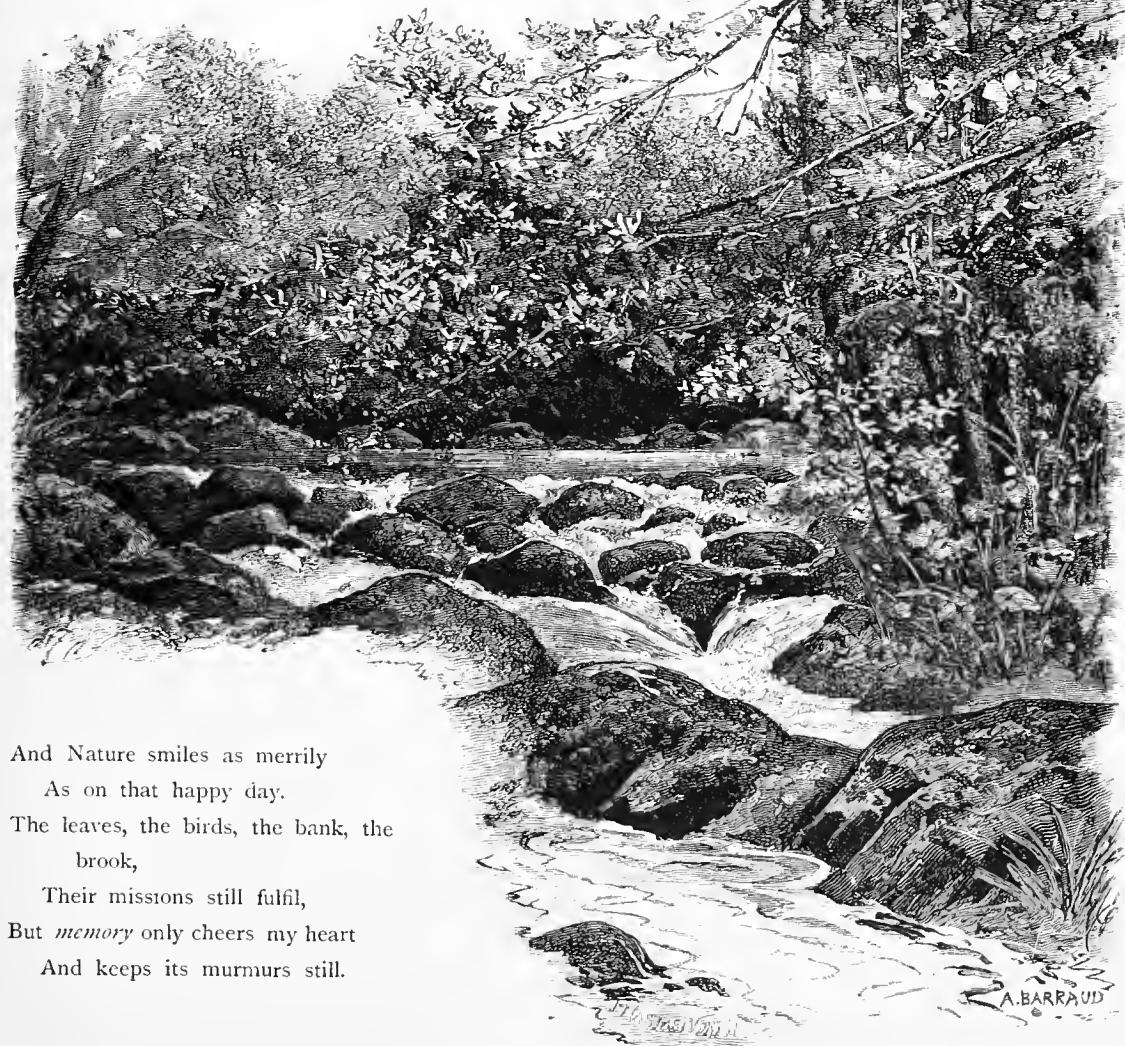
A REMINISCENCE.

BENEATH the quivering arch of leaves,
Where sunlight flickered through,
While birds sang merry songs of love,
Each to its mate so true :
Where just below the mossy bank
The laughing stream flowed by,
We came with fishing-line and rod,
My blue-eyed May and I

Oh ! how her merry laugh rang out,
Startling the birds above !
And I forgot the shining fish
While whispering words of love.
And how the sunlight, falling through
The tangled web of green,
Came dancing down to crown her head—
My blue-eyed May—my queen !

Ah, me! we were so happy then;
So happy, she and I!
How could we dream that clouds would drive
The sunshine from our sky?
For I loved her with man's best love,
And her true heart was mine;
And the dear truth I loved to read
Used in her eyes to shine.

But years have passed since then, and she
Hath with them passed away;



And Nature smiles as merrily
As on that happy day.
The leaves, the birds, the bank, the
brook,
Their missions still fulfil,
But *memory* only cheers my heart
And keeps its murmurs still.



THE FLOWER MISSION.

INTO the homes of sorrow and distress
The rare, sweet flowers go to bud
and bloom,
And with their own bright lives make glad
awhile
The lives that wither in perpetual
gloom.



Poor hearts that long have starved for
word of love ;
Dim eyes that ne'er behold a beauteous
thing ;
And tired hands that stretch themselves
in vain
For joys that ever from their grasp
take wing.



To these, the flowers on their mission go,
And breathe a fragrance fraught with new,
sweet life,
And cause an atmosphere of joy and peace
To enter e'en 'mid scenes of pain and strife.
Sweet buds of beauty! how they seem to say,
"Cheer up! cheer up! there are kind hearts
and true;
And tho' your paths seem overgrown with thorns,
Yet life hath flowers yet in bloom for you."



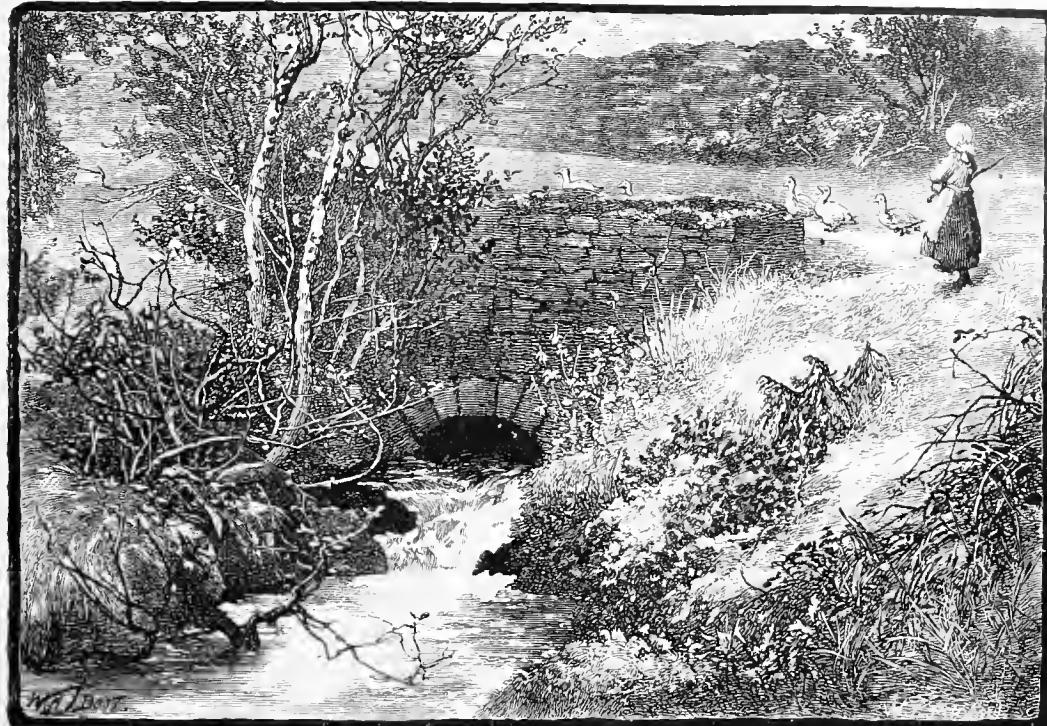
A thousand blessings on the kindly hands
Which pluck the fragrant flowers for the
poor!

A thousand blessings on the kindly feet
Which falter not, but go from door to door
And leave, with tender, loving charity,
The sweet, joy-breathing gifts of love divine!
Who knows what endless flowers of grace and
truth

The Flower Mission may hereafter twine?







ROBIN AND I.

WHAT if I were a lady fair,
Binding each day in my flowing hair
Gems and jewels all rich and rare?

What if I owned my coach and four,
To stand each day at my stately door,
Or bear me in state my journeys o'er?

Ah ! but I couldn't have Robin then !
Robin, poor, but the best of men ;
And riches lacking, himself were vain.

What if my fingers, soft and white,
Were flashing with diamonds' brilliant light,
Dainty with gems so gay and bright ?

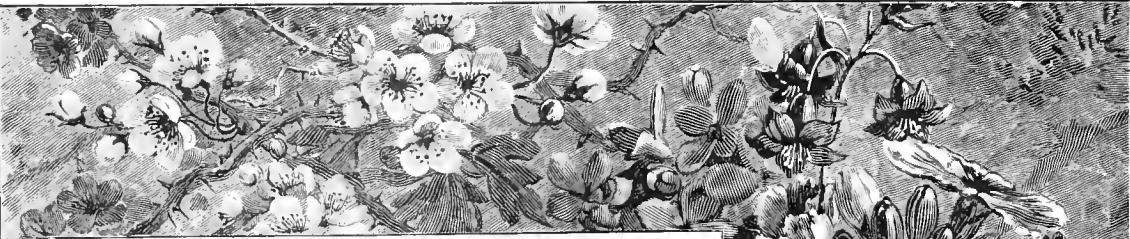
Ah ! mine are brown with the summer sun,
Hard with a toil that is never done,
But *Robin* loves them—every one !

And if I wore dresses of satin sheen,
Garments fit for a "dame" or queen,
Why, Robin would know me not, I ween !

So my own two feet, I'm ready to say,
Must be "coach and four" on market day,
To take me over the roads away.

And the only gems for my waving hair
Must be the beautiful sunbeams fair,
Which Robin and I together may share.

And this locket Robin has given me
Holds the only gems that I care to see—
The truest *eyes* that could ever be !



WHO KNOWS?

WHERE does the sunshine love to hide?
"In the baby's golden hair, we know,
For the breeze that plays with the silken curls,
Has just flown over to tell us so."

They say a bit of the brightest blue
Was lost to-day, from the summer skies;
Who knows where the blue is hiding? "We;
It is hiding here in the baby's eyes."

The soft, pink flush of the ocean shell
Is missing, too: do you see it, pray?
"Do we see it? Yes; it is only here,
Tinting the baby's cheeks to-day."

Two little pearls that are round and white,
As a pearl can be, are lost, I hear.
"Yes, and where should the wee pearls be,
But in the mouth of the baby dear?"

And where are the kisses warm and sweet,
And glowing with all a mother's pride,
That have just escaped from a mother's lips?
"In the baby's dimples the kisses hide."

And where—oh! where is the tender love
That makes our darling of self a part?
"Oh! baby knows where the love is hid;
He holds it fast in his little heart."





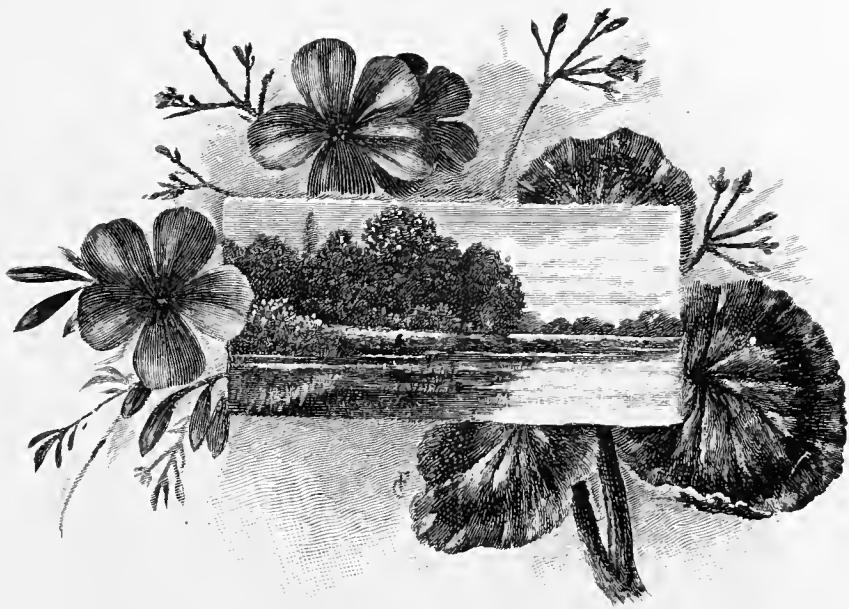


FOR THE SAKE OF PEACE.

ROB and I were playmates once,
Together used to laugh and cry;
A youth and maiden are we now—
Oh, dear! the years so swiftly fly!
We used to play—at lovers, too,
When we were children gay and free;
And now, the rogue, he seems to think
That he should *still* my lover be!

I really can't make up my mind
To quarrel with the foolish boy,
For maybe, if he went away,
My life would lose one-half its joy
And if the question I should try
To argue with him, why—you see,
In argument, e'en when a child,
Rob always got the best of me.

So now what would you really do?
Rob has a word for all I say,
And, after all, my heart inclines
To let him have his own dear way.
Strange how persistent men can be!
What can a timid maiden do?
I think—just for the sake of peace—
I'd better—*yield* the point: don't you?

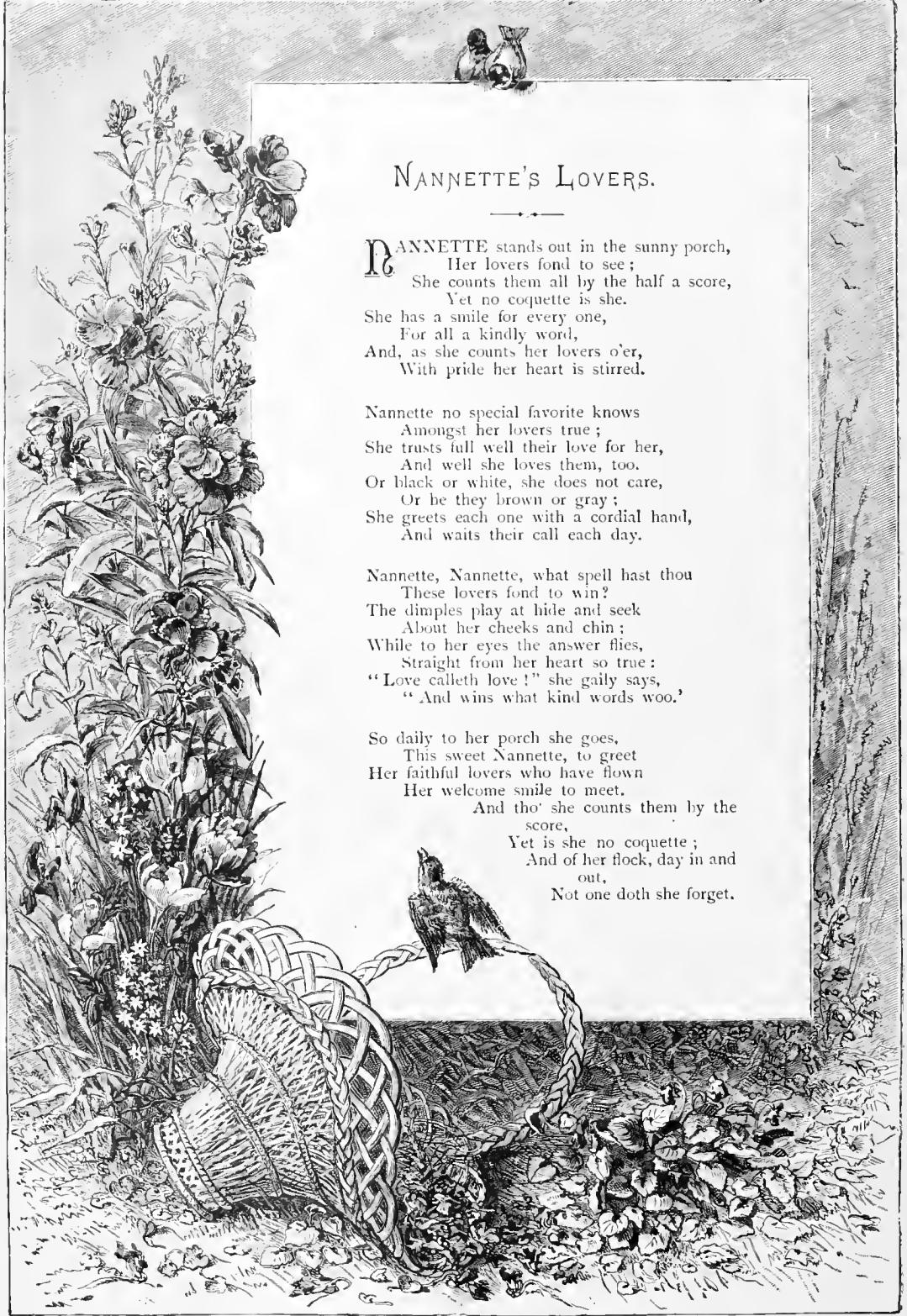


THE GOLDEN GATE.

B_{EYOND} the clouds the Golden Gate is waiting,
Which only angel hands can open wide,
And only they whose day of toil is ended
Pass in, and find their rest at eventide.
What may *we* know of all that there awaits
them,
Of joys which ne'er on earth their lives did
fill?
To them, and only them, is solved the mystery,
Whilst we, with vision dim, must wonder
still.

Oh, Golden Gate, by angel hands so guarded!
Oh, Golden Gate that opens day by day!
What of the dear ones who, thy portals passing,
Have faded from our earthly sight away?
We read of realms of everlasting glory,
Of fields where flowers bloom, nor fade nor
die;
May we not breathe the fragrance of their
blooming,
E'en tho' they blossom far beyond the sky?

Oh, Golden Gate, beyond the clouds now waiting!
Thou openest to let the weary in
To where is only welcome rest eternal,
And nothing more of earthly strife and sin
Oh, life which lieth far beyond our vision!
Oh, rest eternal which our dear ones know!
Oh, Golden Gate which openeth into glory!
By *faith* we enter in, tho' yet below.



NANNETTE'S LOVERS.

NANNETTE stands out in the sunny porch,
Her lovers fond to see;
She counts them all by the half a score,
Yet no coquette is she.
She has a smile for every one,
For all a kindly word,
And, as she counts her lovers o'er,
With pride her heart is stirred.

Nannette no special favorite knows
Amongst her lovers true;
She trusts full well their love for her,
And well she loves them, too.
Or black or white, she does not care,
Or he they brown or gray;
She greets each one with a cordial hand,
And waits their call each day.

Nannette, Nannette, what spell hast thou
These lovers fond to win?
The dimples play at hide and seek
About her cheeks and chin;
While to her eyes the answer flies,
Straight from her heart so true:
"Love calleth love!" she gaily says,
"And wins what kind words woo."

So daily to her porch she goes,
This sweet Nannette, to greet
Her faithful lovers who have flown
Her welcome smile to meet.
And tho' she counts them by the
score,
Yet is she no coquette;
And of her flock, day in and
out,
Not one doth she forget.





GRANDMA'S "AULD LANG SYNE."

GRANDMOTHER GRAY by the window sat
And looked at the setting sun,
And watched the cows as they slowly came
From the pasture, one by one.

And back again to the long-ago
Her memory travelled fast,
While the dim eyes closed as she lived again
'Mid scenes of the happy past.

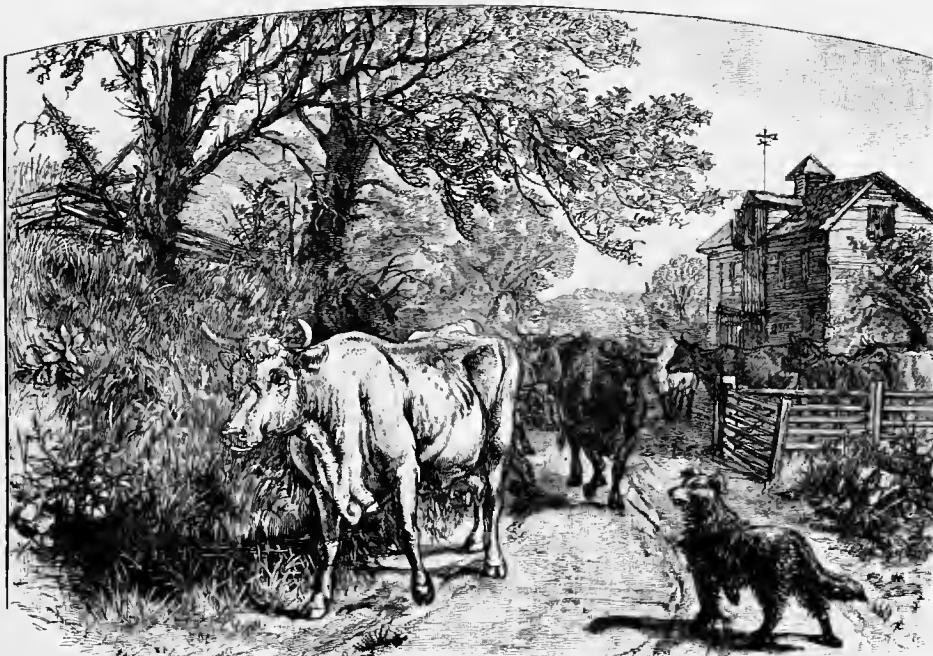
She was thinking over the youthful days
When there by the pasture gate
Young Robin, with milking-pail and stool,
For her coming used to wait.
Those days of courtship, tender and true :
How they thrilled her even now,
Tho' years had parted her love and her,
And 'e hair above her brow

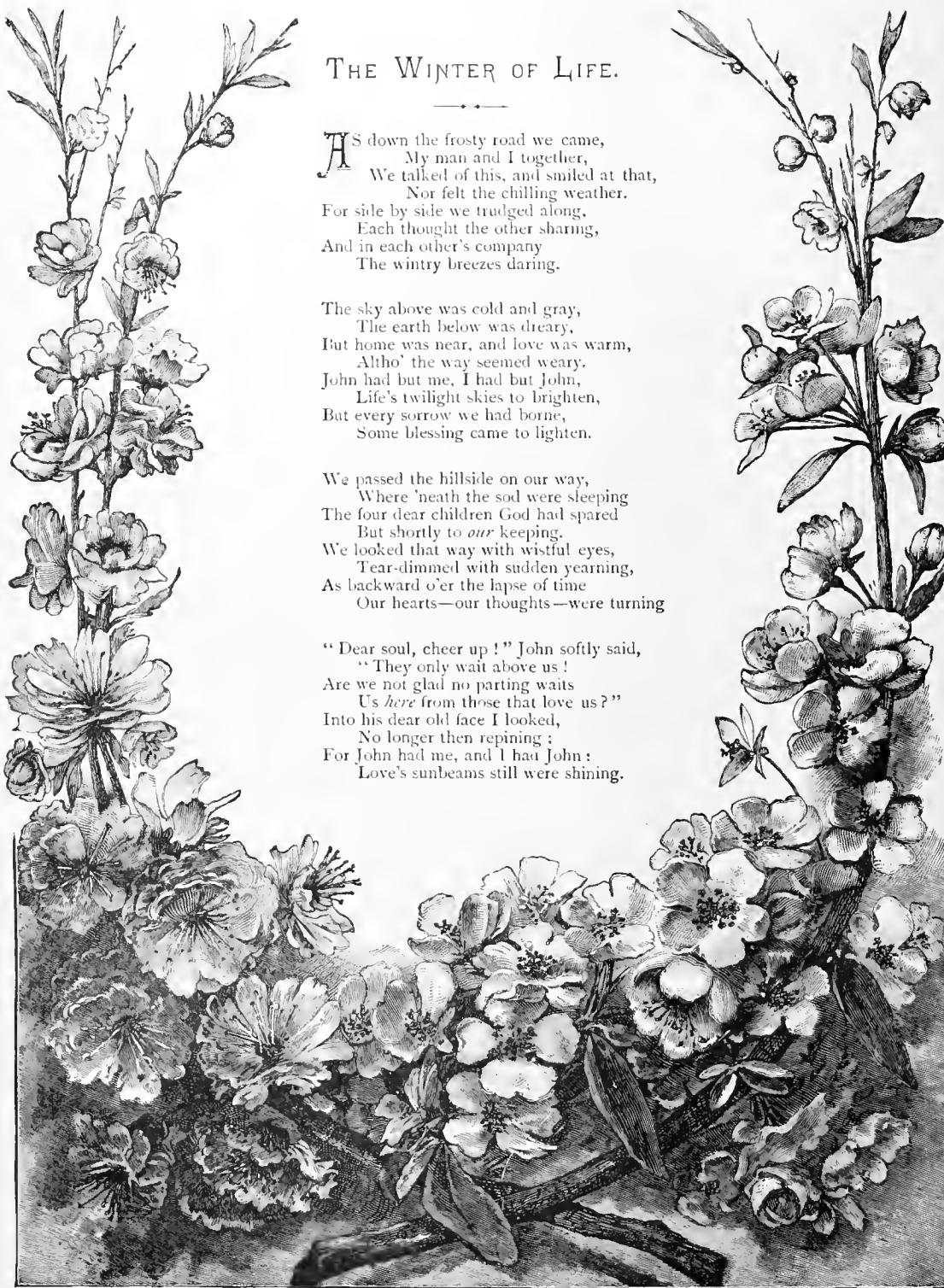
Was white with the winter of life. "Ah, well!"
She murmured, "the *morn* was bright,
Why should I grieve that the clouds hang low
With the coming shades of the night?
For Robin and I, as man and wife,
Were 'lovers' for many a year,
And we're 'lovers' still, tho' he dwells above,
And I am yet waiting here.

"The good Lord knows that it seems full long
Since He called my Robin away ;
And He knows that I am weary and old,
And would fain go any day
To meet the heart so tender, so true,
Which waits for me over there,
Where life is always young, they say,
And skies are forever fair."

* * * * *

There came a time when the sun went down,
And the cows came slowly home,
As Grandmother Gray by the window sat,
While her thoughts seemed still to roam
But the angels came for her waiting soul
While the twilight shadows fell,
And beyond the stars dear Grandma went,
With "Robin" in joy to dwell.





THE WINTER OF LIFE.

HIS down the frosty road we came,
My man and I together,
We talked of this, and smiled at that,
Nor felt the chilling weather.
For side by side we trudged along,
Each thought the other sharing,
And in each other's company
The wintry breezes daring.

The sky above was cold and gray,
The earth below was dreary,
But home was near, and love was warm,
Altho' the way seemed weary.
John had but me, I had but John,
Life's twilight skies to brighten,
But every sorrow we had borne,
Some blessing came to lighten.

We passed the hillside on our way,
Where 'neath the sod were sleeping
The four dear children God had spared
But shortly to *our* keeping.
We looked that way with wistful eyes,
Tear-dimmed with sudden yearning,
As backward o'er the lapse of time
Our hearts—our thoughts—were turning

“ Dear soul, cheer up ! ” John softly said,
“ They only wait above us !
Are we not glad no parting waits
Us *here* from those that love us ? ”
Into his dear old face I looked,
No longer then repining ;
For John had me, and I had John :
Love's sunbeams still were shining.



The summer joys long since were past,
And winter's snows were o'er us ;
The twilight sky was cold and drear,
And night was just before us.
But though the way so weary seemed,
Yet John and I were merry ;
For said I not that *home* was near ?
And hearts and thoughts grew cheery.

And thinking o'er that walk to-day—
When John and I together,
Side close by side, came down the road,
All thro' the frosty weather—
I think of how, life's journey trod,
With trust forsaken never,
We've nearly reached at night that *home*
Where dwelleth rest forever.



MY LITTLE FLOWER.

RHAT do I do for a living, you ask,
As the days and weeks go by?

We gather the flowers and bring them to town,
And sell them, my baby and I.

Yes, baby helps me, young as she is,
For there's never a day or an hour
I fail to rejoice in her innocent love,
And I call her my sweetest flower.

Our home is only a cottage small
Outside of the city line;
But poor as it is, we get our share
Of the beautiful summer shine.
And I gather wild flowers at early morn
To sell to you, ladies, here,
And we earn our living right merrily so,
I and my baby dear.

Yes, ladies, the daisies are white and fair,

And I love all flowers that grow,
But there's never a flower upon the earth
Like *my* little flower—I know.

She holds the *violet* in her eyes,
The *rose* in her cheek so fair,
And the heart of the *daisy*, you can see,
Lies warm in her golden hair.

So, poor indeed tho' our lot may be
As the days and weeks go by,
No happier people ever were found
Than we—my baby and I.
Oh! summer may spread over hill and plain
Full lavishly hour by hour,
Her treasures of bud and of blossom, but I
Hold ever—the *sweetest flower*.

THE HAY-FIELD.

O H ! the charm of a summer day,
And a jolly ride for a load of hay !
How the children shout and sing,
Till the very fields with their music ring !
Down the lane, where the stately trees
Rustle and bow to the merry breeze ;
Past the brook, where the timid trout
From his hiding-nook peeps warily out,
To the meadow gate, where the bars swing wide
To let the creaking old cart inside.
Then, pile it in—the fragrant hay,
Pile it in on the summer day ;
Fill the cart till it overflows,

And on and on thro' the meadow goes
From mow to mow, till the work is done.
Now is the time for the children's fun !
Out again with the wagon-load,
Swinging and swaying along the road,
Bound for the barn where the doors stand wide,
With the sentinel maples at its side.
“ Gee ! Gee-haw ! ” “ Now, youngsters there,
Hold hard, keep steady ! So, have a care ! ”
And without a tumble, a bruise, or fall,
Horses, hay-cart, children and all,
Are safe on the old barn's grain-spread floor,
And grandpa knows that the fun is o'er.





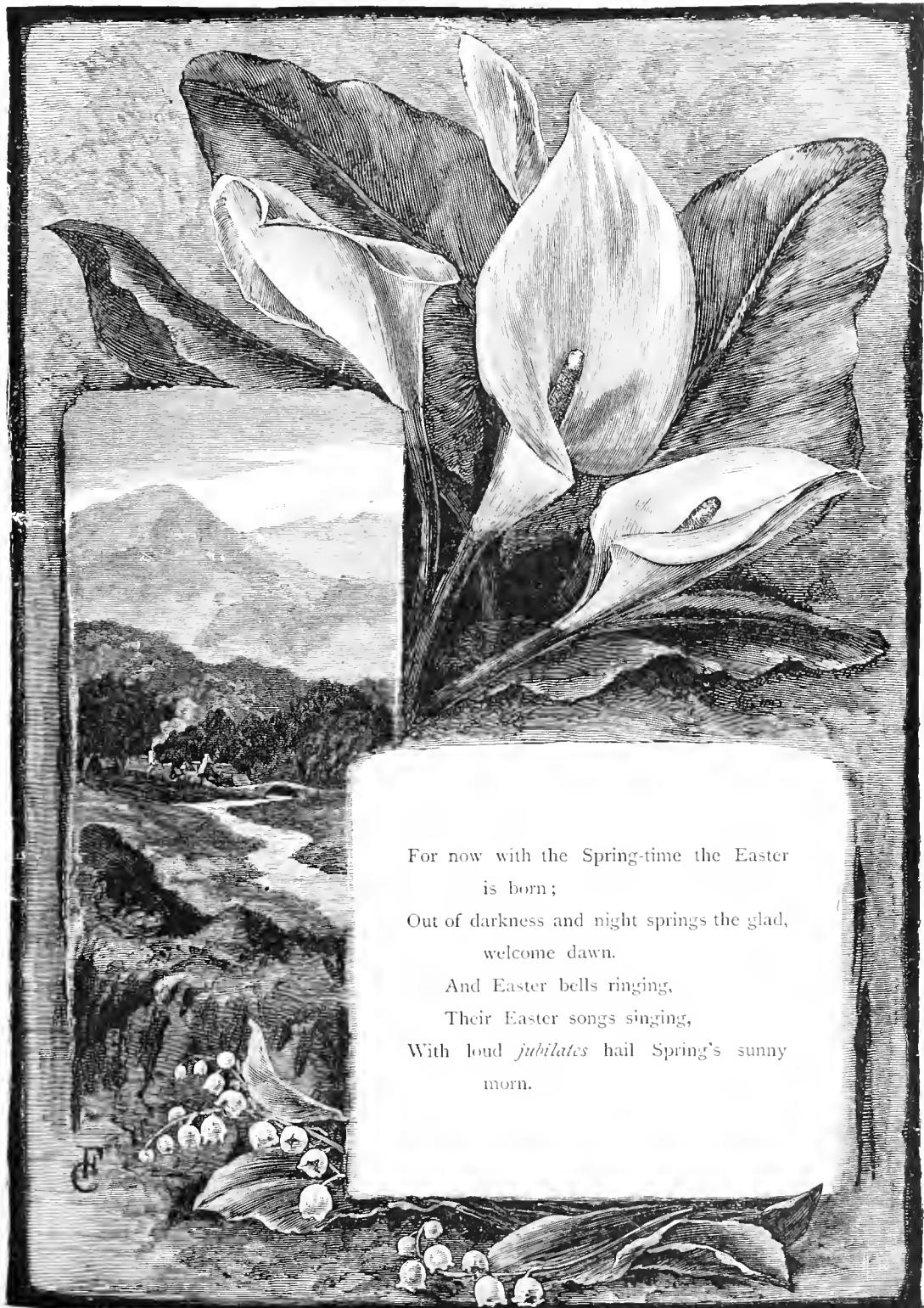
FOR EASTER-TIDE.

THE shadows of winter, so chill and so gray,
Have passed from the meadows and hill-tops away :
There's a shine in the skies
Born of Spring's merry eyes,
And the heart of the Earth groweth softer each day.

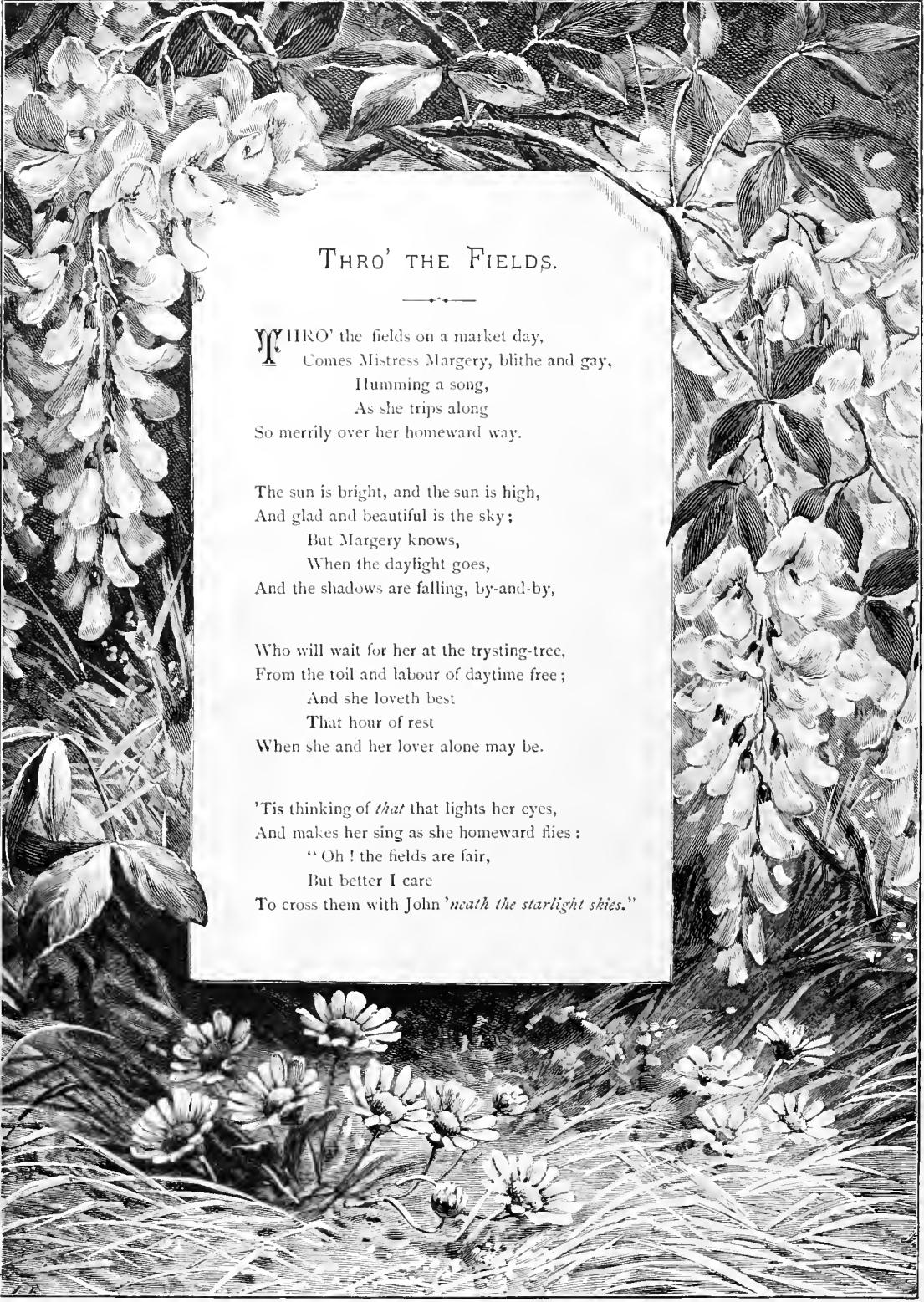
See, how she releases from fetter and chain
Her treasures which spring into freedom again,
Till with beauty and bloom,
And with sweetest perfume,
Is filled every hill-side and meadow and lane.

But fairest of all things that blossom and grow,
Sweet as the summer, and pure as the snow,
Is the lily that tells,
Like the glad Easter bells,
Once more the sweet story which all hearts should know.

Bloom out, fragrant lilies, bloom brightly and fair,
Breathe out your pure breath on the soft balmy air ;
Fling your banners so white
Gaily out to the light,
For past is the lenten of sorrow and care.



For now with the Spring-time the Easter
is born;
Out of darkness and night springs the glad,
welcome dawn.
And Easter bells ringing,
Their Easter songs singing,
With loud *jubilates* hail Spring's sunny
morn.



THRO' THE FIELDS.

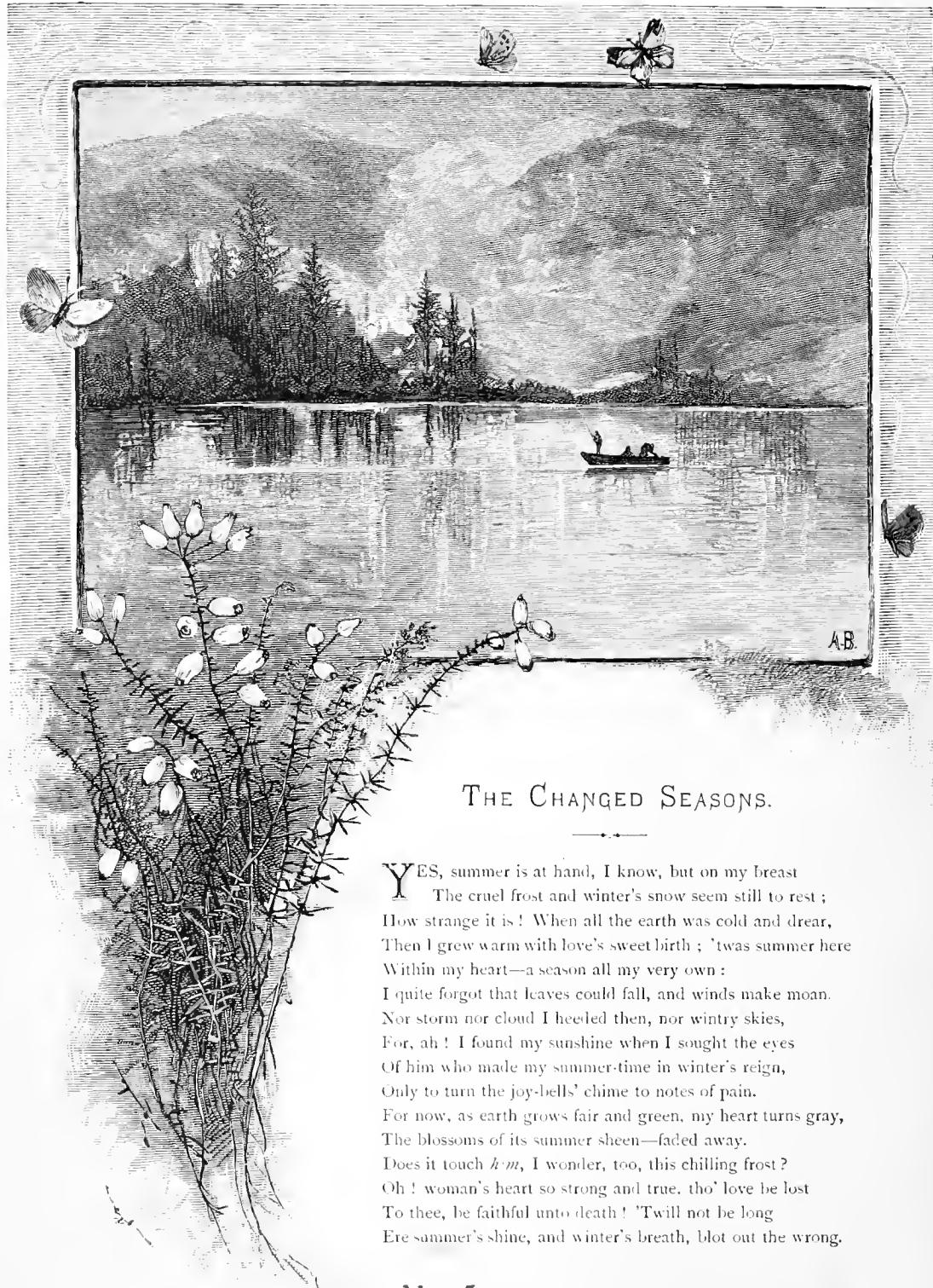
THRO' the fields on a market day,
Comes Mistress Margery, blithe and gay,
Humming a song,
As she trips along
So merrily over her homeward way.

The sun is bright, and the sun is high,
And glad and beautiful is the sky ;
But Margery knows,
When the daylight goes,
And the shadows are falling, by-and-by,

Who will wait for her at the trysting-tree,
From the toil and labour of daytime free ;
And she loveth best
That hour of rest
When she and her lover alone may be.

'Tis thinking of *that* that lights her eyes,
And makes her sing as she homeward flies :
" Oh ! the fields are fair,
But better I care
To cross them with John 'neath the starlight skies."

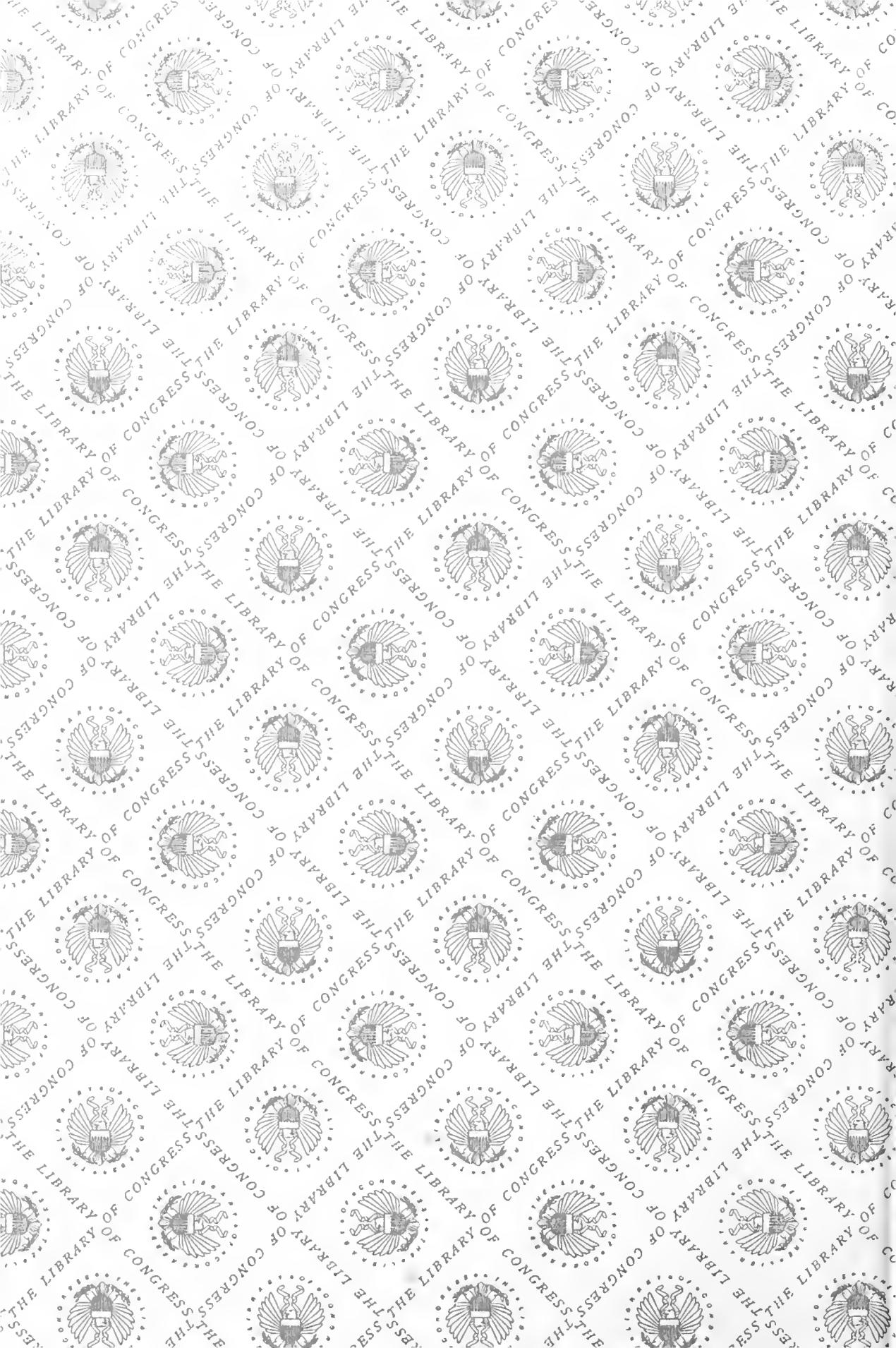


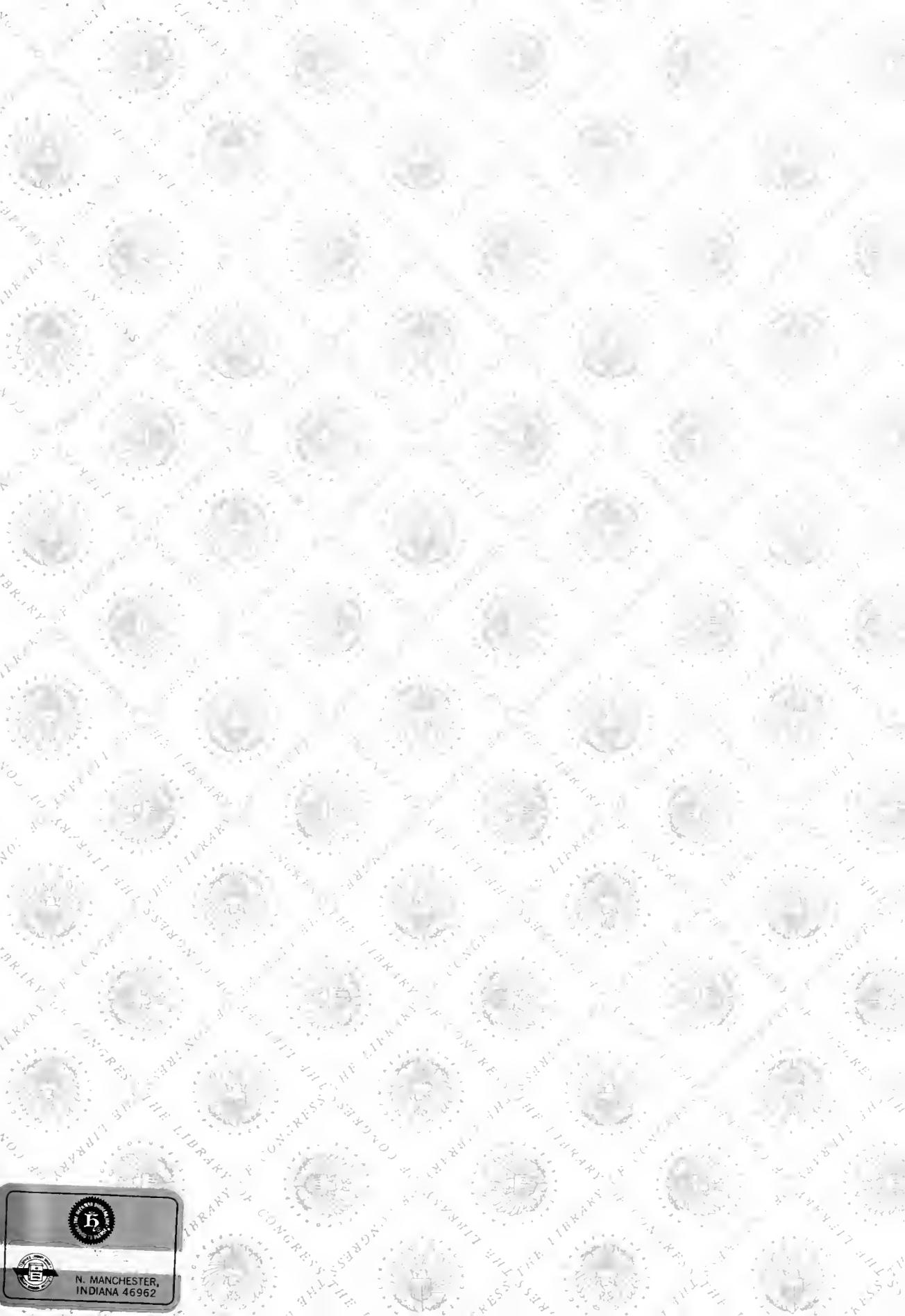


THE CHANGED SEASONS.

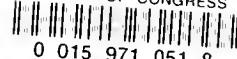
YES, summer is at hand, I know, but on my breast
The cruel frost and winter's snow seem still to rest ;
How strange it is ! When all the earth was cold and drear,
Then I grew warm with love's sweet birth ; 'twas summer here
Within my heart—a season all my very own :
I quite forgot that leaves could fall, and winds make moan.
Nor storm nor cloud I heeded then, nor wintry skies,
For, ah ! I found my sunshine when I sought the eyes
Of him who made my summer-time in winter's reign,
Only to turn the joy-bells' chime to notes of pain.
For now, as earth grows fair and green, my heart turns gray,
The blossoms of its summer sheen—faded away.
Does it touch *h'm*, I wonder, too, this chilling frost ?
Oh ! woman's heart so strong and true, tho' love be lost
To thee, be faithful unto death ! 'Twill not be long
Ere summer's shine, and winter's breath, blot out the wrong.

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